

הגדה זבח פסח

ABARBANEL

HAGGADAH

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abridged and translated by
Yisrael Isser Zvi Herczeg

edited by
Shlomo Fox

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THE PASSOVER HAGGADAH WITH THE
COMMENTARY OF DON ISAAC ABARBANEL

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Publisher's Foreword

Don Yitzchak Abarbanel was a rare human being, indeed. To King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of fifteenth-century Spain, he was the statesman and finance minister who put their empire's treasury in order. To his Jewish countrymen, he was the leader who worked mightily to protect Jewish lives and interests in that historically hostile country, and who resigned from his privileged governmental status and led 80,000 fellow Jews out of Spain on *Tisha B'Av* 1492, in the face of the Inquisition. To Jewish history he is one of the premier commentators on the Scriptures and other classic works.

Abarbanel's *Zevach Pesach* on the *Haggadah* is written in the style he made uniquely his own. On each paragraph or subject of the *Haggadah*, he raises many questions, and then answers them with a long discussion that is a model of clarity and comprehensiveness. But as a rule, his commentary is much too long for the average reader. This abridgement captures the flavor of *Zevach Pesach*. It lists Abarbanel's major questions and presents his answers in abridged form, retaining the flavor and depth, but presenting them in such a way that the reader grasps them easily and well.

We are gratified for the privilege of making this *Haggadah* available to the Jewish public. For most people, *Zevach Pesach* was a closed book because of its length. Now, Abarbanel's classic explanations will enlighten the *Seder* for everyone.

For this we are grateful to Yisrael Isser Herczeg, who abridged and translated *Zevach Pesach*, and we are proud to welcome him to the roster of distinguished scholars who have contributed to the ArtScroll Series. The book has been edited by Shlomo Fox, whose skills have long been familiar to and appreciated by our readers.

Once more it is our pleasure to acknowledge the Director of ArtScroll Jerusalem, Reb Shmuel Blitz, for coordinating this major project in the same efficient, dedicated manner that he brings to all ArtScroll books from Israel. He is a major force in the field of Torah Judaica and we are proud that he has been a key factor in our work since its earliest years.

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ABARBANEL HAGGADAH

TEXT AND TRANSLATION OF HAGGADAH WITH COMMENTARY OF DON ISAAC ABARBANEL

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without it. It wasn't an easy decision or a quick one, but I sensed that I had taken my first step on the path towards truth. I couldn't abandon the quest. So here I am today, in your *shiur*."

It is my sincere hope that the translation of this book will provide the English-speaking public with the opportunity to discover their portion in the Torah of Abarbanel.



It is inconceivable for me to attempt to adequately thank my parents for all that they have done for me. I take this opportunity merely to express my gratitude to my father, REB DOVID HERCZEG ז"ל, and my mother, תברלחטו"א, MRS. ROSE HERCZEG, for two things — for instilling in me a love for Torah, and, *lehavdil*, a love for the written word in general, the combination of which has led to the writing of this book. I thank also my father-in-law and mother-in-law, DR. AND MRS. ARYEH LEIB EISENMAN נ"י, for their support and encouragement along the path I have embarked upon. SHMUEL BLITZ and SHLOMO FOX have been, respectively, a publisher and editor whom it has been a pleasure to work with. Special thanks are due to my dear friend YISRAEL MEIR HACHOEN BURAK for his good advice and sound judgment which have accompanied this undertaking from its inception to its culmination. REB SHEAH BRANDER'S artistry is well known and his masterful cover and page design for this *Haggadah* attest to his graphics genius. Thanks also to YITZCHOK SAFTLAS who assisted him in preparing the cover. MRS. ESTHER DICKER typed the original manuscript; RABBI AVIE GOLD and MRS. JUDIDICK read the entire manuscript and made valuable suggestions which were incorporated into the final draft. MRS. MENUCHA SILVER did the typesetting with the assistance of MRS. ZISSI LANDAU and BASSIE GOLDSTEIN; MRS. FAYGIE WEINBAUM and RABBI YOSEF GESSER proofread the pages. To all of them, I am grateful.

I dedicate this volume in memory of RAV YOSEF HALEVI EISENMAN ז"ל — a *musmach* of Rav Yitzchak Elchonon Spector ז"ל and Rav Leib Tzirelson ז"ל — who served as a *rov* in Rostov, Detroit, and Jerusalem's Bikur Cholim Hospital. I was never privileged to meet Rav Eisenman, but I owe him a deep debt of gratitude, for every day I am the beneficiary of the legacy of Torah and *yiras shamayim* that he has passed on to his great-granddaughter — my dear wife, PHYLLIS ESTHER נ"י — and the rest of her family. In his *zechus* may we be privileged to see בני ובני בנים עוסקים בתורה ובמצות.

Yisrael Isser Zvi Herczeg
Adar 5750

Translator's Preface

In his commentary on the *Haggadah*, Don Yitzchak Abarbanel asks why the discussion of the Four Sons is prefaced by the blessing בָּרוּךְ הַמְקוֹם, *Blessed is HaMakom* (the Omnipresent). The fact that the Torah answers the same question four ways, he explains, shows how concerned Hashem is that every individual find his portion in the Torah. It is for this display of kindness that we bless Him.

Abarbanel's own work has something of this quality. It appeals to all who have a portion in Torah — from the most learned *talmid chacham* to the soul who was present at Mt. Sinai but has not yet found his true identity, to the newcomer who has just embraced Judaism. The following incident is illustrative of how everyone can find his niche in Abarbanel's writings:

In Jerusalem in the early seventies, a young *talmid chacham* was teaching *gemara* at one of the yeshivos. One of his outstanding students was a *ger tzedek* (convert), a professor of Romance Languages at an American university who took leave of absence from his job to devote himself to Torah study. As the *rebbe* and *talmid* became close, the almost inevitable question arose — “Why did you become Jewish?”

“I was working on my doctoral dissertation at the national library at Toledo, Spain,” began the reply. “During the course of my research, I came across a centuries-old Spanish manuscript which I began to peruse. It was a philosophical treatise by someone named Don Isaac Abarbanel. I soon became engrossed in this book. It was like nothing I had ever read before. Nothing I had seen that dealt with man's most serious existential problems had the ring of truth that this old book had.

“After I finished the book, I had to have more. There is only so much of Abarbanel's work available in Spanish, so I began knocking on doors, looking for people to teach it to me in the original Hebrew. It soon became obvious that I was not going to find a Torah scholar who was willing to teach a non-Jew the thoughts of Abarbanel. But I knew that my life would be empty

BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION

Don Yitzchak Abarbanel

The Golden Age of Spanish Jewry is one of the glorious epochs of Jewish history. Despite intermittent periods of hostility on the part of their Gentile neighbors, the Jews of Spain and Portugal flourished both spiritually and materially. To a far greater extent than the Jews of other parts of Europe, they became an integral fiber in the fabric of the contemporary culture. Indeed, with the banishment of its Jews, the illustrious society of Renaissance Spain seemed to begin to slowly unravel.

This unique Jewish community produced a unique breed of Torah leaders. The giants of Spanish Jewry were not only Torah scholars. They were masters of the finest elements of the secular milieu of their environment. The Rambam (Maimonides) and the Ramban (Nachmanides) were both physicians. The Raibag (Rabbi Levi ben Gershon) was a noted astronomer. They and other Spanish *gedolim* were well versed in the philosophical trends of their times. The exemplar of the Spanish *gadol*, the one whose very name bespeaks his deep involvement in Spanish life at large, was also the last — Don Yitzchak Abarbanel.

Don Yitzchak Abarbanel was born in Lisbon in 1437. His father, Yehudah, was a minister of the Portuguese national treasury. The Abarbanel family traced its ancestry back to David HaMelech. Abarbanel refers to himself as “of the source of Yishai [King David’s father] of Beis Lechem” (מִשְׁרֵשׁ יִשְׂי בֵּית הַלְחָמִי). According to family tradition, its ancestors made their way to the Iberian Peninsula after the destruction of the First Temple.

Little is known of Abarbanel’s childhood, but by his early twenties he was recognized as a learned and prominent member of Lisbon’s Jewish community, having by then written books on topics of

kingdom to kingdom and lost all my possessions, I have begun to expound on the Book of *Hashem*.”*

The Italian period of Abarbanel's life was the most productive literarily. His first works there were written with the welfare of his fellow Spanish exiles in mind. Persecuted and broken, many of them fell into a state of despair. Abarbanel wrote three books on the subject of the Mashiach. They quickly served as a source of solace and reassurance to them. The commentary on the *Haggadah* is also a product of this period, having been completed in 1496, while the author was residing in Monopoli, a town in the Kingdom of Naples.

The last years of Abarbanel's life were spent in Venice. At the time, Venice and Portugal were negotiating a trade agreement. Yet again, Abarbanel found himself at the highest echelons of government when he was called upon to act as an intermediary between the two states. He remained in the service of the Venetian government until his death in 1508. He was buried at Padua where his funeral was attended by throngs of Jews and Gentiles alike. The exact location of his grave is unknown.

[* Abarbanel concludes with a clever play on words he based on a standard Talmudic phrase referring to poorly transmitted Mishnaic material: חסורי חסור, “Something has been lost, but this is how it should be taught.”]

Jewish philosophy. He went into government service in the footsteps of his father, rising to the position of minister of the Portuguese treasury.

His powerful government position brought Abarbanel wealth and fame, but not satisfaction. He writes bitterly of spending time “in the courts of kings and in their service, but not serving the King of Kings, the Holy One, Blessed is He.”

In his role as royal minister, Abarbanel had the opportunity to come to the aid of his fellow Jews in distress. When Arabs took two hundred fifty Jews captive in Arzilla, Morocco, and sold them into slavery, Abarbanel undertook a campaign to raise the necessary money to free them and resettle them in Portugal, donating generously from his own funds.

Abarbanel had to flee Portugal in 1483 when he was accused of involvement in a plot against King John II. He denied being part of the conspiracy, but was nonetheless sentenced to death in absentia in 1485. He meanwhile resettled in Castile, where he again became a leading treasury official.

It was during his Castilian exile that Abarbanel began his monumental commentary on *Tanach*. This work is marked by its comprehensiveness and its unique style of organization. Each section of each book of *Tanach* is preceded by a long list of questions on the text which are answered in the course of the commentary. Abarbanel also pioneered in beginning his commentary on each book of *Tanach* with an introduction discussing the major themes of the book.

1492 was the darkest year for the Jews of Spain. Centuries of settlement in a land they considered their home came to a cruel and sudden end. Though the king and queen of Spain pleaded with him to stay, Abarbanel chose to go into exile once again with his fellow Jews — spending the rest of his life in various parts of Italy, with the exception of a brief sojourn in Corfu.

Again Abarbanel was employed by various governments, his reputation as a politician and diplomat preceding him to his new land. But by this stage of his life, Abarbanel focused on other pursuits. “All the days I spent in the courts and palaces of kings,” he writes, “busy in their service, I did not have time for study. I wasted my years foolishly in the pursuit of fortune and fame. But my wealth has been lost under wretched circumstances, and Israel’s glory has been exiled. After I have wandered about the earth from

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THE SEARCH FOR CHAMETZ

On the night of 14 Nissan, the night before the Pesach Seder, the search for chametz (leaven) is made. It should be done with a candle as soon as possible after nightfall. [When the first Seder is on Saturday night, the search is conducted on Thursday night (13 Nissan).]

Before the search is begun, the following blessing is recited.

If several people assist in the search, only one recites the blessing for all.

Blessed are You, HASHEM, our God, King of the universe,
Who has sanctified us with His commandments and has
commanded us concerning the removal of *chametz*.

After the search, the chametz is wrapped and put aside in a safe place
to be burned in the morning. Then the following declaration is made:

Any *chametz* or leaven that is in my possession which I
have not seen, have not removed and do not know about,
should be annulled and become ownerless, like dust of the
earth.

BURNING THE CHAMETZ

In the morning, after the chametz has been burned, the following declaration is made.

Any *chametz* or leaven that is in my possession, whether I
have recognized it or not, whether I have seen it or not,
whether I have removed it or not, should be annulled and
become ownerless, like dust of the earth.

ERUV TAVSHILIN

When Pesach falls on Thursday and Friday, an eruv tavshilin is made on Wednesday.

The eruv-foods are held while the following blessing and declaration are recited.

Blessed are You, HASHEM, our God, King of the universe,
Who has sanctified us with His commandments and has
commanded us concerning the *mitzvah* of *eruv*.

Through this *eruv* may we be permitted to bake, cook,
insulate, kindle flame, prepare, and do anything neces-
sary on the Festival for the sake of the *Shabbos* [for
ourselves and for all Jews who live in this city].

בדיקת חמץ

On the night of 14 Nissan, the night before the Pesach Seder, the search for chametz (leaven) is made. It should be done with a candle as soon as possible after nightfall. [When the first Seder is on Saturday night, the search is conducted on Thursday night (13 Nissan).]

Before the search is begun, the following blessing is recited.

If several people assist in the search, only one recites the blessing for all.

**בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל בַּעוֹר חֻמֶּץ.**

After the search, the chametz is wrapped and put aside in a safe place to be burned in the morning. Then the following declaration is made:

**כָּל חֲמִירָא וְחֲמִיעָא דְּאַכָּא בְּרִשּׁוֹתַי, וְלֹא חֲמֵתָהּ
וְלֹא בַּעֲרֵתָהּ וְלֹא יִדְעָנָא לָהּ, לְבָטֵל
וְלֹהֲוֵי הַפֶּקֶר בְּעַפְרָא דְּאַרְעָא.**

ביעור חמץ

In the morning, after the chametz has been burned, the following declaration is made.

**כָּל חֲמִירָא וְחֲמִיעָא דְּאַכָּא בְּרִשּׁוֹתַי, וְחֲזֵתָהּ וְלֹא
חֲזֵתָהּ, וְחֲמֵתָהּ וְלֹא חֲמֵתָהּ, דְּבַעֲרֵתָהּ
וְלֹא בַּעֲרֵתָהּ, לְבָטֵל וְלֹהֲוֵי הַפֶּקֶר בְּעַפְרָא דְּאַרְעָא.**

ערוב תבשילין

When Pesach falls on Thursday and Friday, an eruv tavshilin is made on Wednesday.

The eruv-foods are held while the following blessing and declaration are recited.

**בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל מִצְוֹת עֶרֶוּב.**

**בִּהְדִּין עֶרֶוּבָא יְהֵא שָׂרָא לָנָא לְאַפּוּי וּלְבִשּׁוּלֵי
וּלְאַטְמוּנֵי וּלְאַדְלוּקֵי שְׂרָגָא וּלְתַקְנָא וּלְמַעְבֵּד
כָּל צְרָכָנָא, מִיּוֹמָא טָבָא לְשַׁבָּתָא [לָנָא וּלְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל
הַדָּרִים בְּעִיר הַזֹּאת].**

KINDLING LIGHTS

On each *Yom Tov* night of Pesach two blessings are recited. When Pesach coincides with the Sabbath, light the candles, then cover the eyes and recite the blessings. Uncover the eyes and gaze briefly at the candles. When Pesach falls on a weekday, some follow the above procedure, while others recite the blessings before lighting the candles. When

Pesach coincides with the Sabbath, the words in brackets are added.

[It is forbidden to create a new flame — for example, by striking a match — on *Yom Tov*. Therefore, on the second night the candles must be lit from a flame that has been burning from before *Yom Tov*.]

Blessed are You, HASHEM, our God, King of the universe,
Who has sanctified us with His commandments, and has
commanded us to kindle the light of [the Sabbath and of]
the Festival.

Blessed are You, HASHEM, our God, King of the universe,
Who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to
this season.

It is customary to recite the following prayer after the kindling.

The words in brackets are included as they apply.

May it be Your will, HASHEM, my God and God of my
forefathers, that You show favor to me [my husband,
my sons, my daughters, my father, my mother] and all my
relatives; and that You grant us and all Israel a good and
long life; that You remember us with a beneficent memory
and blessing; that You consider us with a consideration of
salvation and compassion; that You bless us with great
blessings; that You make our households complete; that
You cause Your Presence to dwell among us. Privilege me to
raise children and grandchildren who are wise and under-
standing, who love HASHEM and fear God, people of truth,
holy offspring, attached to HASHEM, who illuminate the
world with Torah and good deeds and with every labor in
the service of the Creator. Please, hear my supplication at
this time, in the merit of Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah,
our mothers, and cause our light to illuminate that it be not
extinguished forever, and let Your countenance shine so
that we are saved. Amen.

הדלקת הנרות

On each *Yom Tov* night of Pesach two blessings are recited. When Pesach coincides with the Sabbath, light the candles, then cover the eyes and recite the blessings. Uncover the eyes and gaze briefly at the candles. When Pesach falls on a weekday, some follow the above procedure, while others recite the blessings before lighting the candles. When

Pesach coincides with the Sabbath, the words in brackets are added.

[It is forbidden to create a new flame — for example, by striking a match — on *Yom Tov*. Therefore, on the second night the candles must be lit from a flame that has been burning from before *Yom Tov*.]

**בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל [שַׁבָּת וְשֶׁל]
יוֹם טוֹב.**

**בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחֲיָנוּ וְקִיָּמָנוּ
וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לַזְמַן הַזֶּה.**

It is customary to recite the following prayer after the kindling.
The words in brackets are included as they apply.

**יְהִי רָצוֹן לְפָנֶיךָ, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי, שֶׁתְּחַוֶּנּוּ
אוֹתִי [וְאֶת אִישִׁי, וְאֶת בְּנִי, וְאֶת בְּנוֹתַי,
וְאֶת אָבִי, וְאֶת אִמִּי] וְאֶת כָּל קְרוֹבִי; וְתֵתֵן לָנוּ וּלְכָל
יִשְׂרָאֵל חַיִּים טוֹבִים וְאַרוּכִים; וְתַזְכְּרֵנוּ בְּזִכְרוֹן טוֹבָה
וּבְרָכָה; וְתַפְקֶדְנוּ בְּפִקְדַת יְשׁוּעָה וְרַחֲמִים; וְתַבְרַכְנוּ
בְּרָכוֹת גְּדוּלוֹת; וְתַשְׁלִים בְּתִינּוּ; וְתַשְׁכֵּן שְׁכִינָתְךָ
בֵּינֵינוּ. וְזַכֵּנִי לַגָּדֵל בָּנִים וּבָנֵי בָנִים חֲכָמִים וְנְבוֹנִים,
אוֹהֲבֵי יְיָ, יִרְאֵי אֱלֹהִים, אֲנָשִׁי אֱמֶת, זָרַע קָדֵשׁ,
בִּיהוּדָה דְּבָקִים, וּמְאִירִים אֶת הָעוֹלָם בְּתוֹרָה וּבְמַעֲשִׂים
טוֹבִים, וּבְכָל מְלָאכַת עֲבוֹדַת הַבּוֹרָא. אָנָּה שֹׁמֵעַ אֶת
תְּחִנָּתִי בְּעֵת הַזֹּאת, בְּזִכְוֹת שְׁרָה וּרְבֵקָה וְרַחֵל וְלֵאָה
אֲמוֹתֵינוּ, וְהָאֵר גְּרָנוּ שְׁלֵא יִכָּבֵה לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד, וְהָאֵר
פָּנֶיךָ וְנוֹשְׁעָה. אָמֵן.**

The Talmud lists several vegetables that qualify as maror, two of which are put on the Seder plate in the places marked chazeres and maror. Most people use romaine lettuce (whole leaves or stalks) for chazeres, and horseradish (whole or grated) for maror, although either may be used for the mitzvah of eating maror later in the Seder.

Charoses — The bitter herbs are dipped into charoses (a mixture of grated apples, nuts, other fruit, cinnamon and other spices, mixed with red wine). The charoses has the appearance of mortar to symbolize the lot of the Hebrew slaves, whose lives were embittered by hard labor with brick and mortar.

Z'roa [Roasted bone] and **Beitzah** [Roasted egg] — On the eve of Passover in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, two sacrifices were offered and their meat roasted and eaten at the Seder feast. To commemorate these two sacrifices, we place a roasted bone (with some meat on it) and a roasted hard-boiled egg on the Seder plate.

The egg, a symbol of mourning, is used in place of a second piece of meat as a reminder of our mourning at the destruction of the Temple — may it be rebuilt speedily in our day.

Karpas — A vegetable (celery, parsley, boiled potato) other than bitter herbs completes the Seder plate. It will be dipped in salt water and eaten. (The salt water is not put on the Seder plate, but it, too, should be prepared beforehand, and placed near the Seder plate.)

🥰 Preparing for the Seder

The Seder preparations should be made in time for the Seder to begin as soon as the synagogue services are finished. It should not begin before nightfall, however. Matzah, bitter herbs and several other items of symbolic significance are placed on the Seder plate in the arrangement shown below.



ג' מצות
3 MATZOS

Matzah — Three whole matzos are placed one atop the other, separated by a cloth or napkin. Matzah must be eaten three times during the Seder, by itself, with maror, and as the afikoman. Each time, the minimum portion of matzah for each person should have a volume equivalent to half an egg. Where many people are present, enough matzos should be available to enable each participant to receive a proper portion.

Maror and Chazeres — Bitter herbs are eaten twice during the Seder, once by themselves and a second time with matzah. Each time a minimum portion, equal to the volume of half an egg, should be eaten.

KADDESH

Kiddush should be recited and the Seder begun as soon after synagogue services as possible — however, not before nightfall. Each participant's cup should be poured by someone else to symbolize the majesty of the evening, as though each participant had a servant. On Shabbos begin here:

(And there was evening and there was morning)

The sixth day. And the heavens and the earth and all their array were completed. And God completed on the seventh day His work which He had done. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, for on it He rested from all His work which God created to make.¹

On all nights other than Friday, begin here; on Friday night include all passages in parentheses.

By your leave, my masters and teachers:

Blessed are You, HASHEM, our God, King of the Universe, Who creates the fruit of the vine.

Blessed are You, HASHEM, our God, King of the Universe, Who has chosen us from among all peoples, raised us above all languages, and sanctified us with His commandments. And You have given us, HASHEM, our God, lovingly, (*Shabbas* for rest, and) appointed times for gladness, festivals and holidays for rejoicing, this day of (*Shabbos* and this day of) the Festival of Matzos, the time of our freedom, (lovingly,) a holy assembly in commemoration of the Exodus from Egypt. For You have chosen us and sanctified us from among all peoples and (*Shabbos* and) Your sacred holidays (with love and goodwill) with gladness and joy You have granted us a heritage. Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who sanctifies (the *Shabbos* and) Yisrael and the Festivals.

KIDDUSH CONTINUES ON THE NEXT PAGE.

(1) *Bereishis* 1:31-2:3.

קדש

Kiddush should be recited and the Seder begun as soon after synagogue services as possible — however, not before nightfall. Each participant's cup should be poured by someone else to symbolize the majesty of the evening, as though each participant had a servant. On Shabbos begin here:

(וַיְהִי עֶרֶב וַיְהִי בֹקֶר)

יום הששי: וַיְכַלּוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל צָבָאָם. וַיְכַל
אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר
עָשָׂה, וַיִּשְׁבֹּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְכַל מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה.
וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ, כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת
מְכַל מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת.¹

On all nights other than Friday, begin here; on Friday night
include all passages in parentheses.

סְבְּרֵי מֶרְנָן וּרְבִנָּן וּרְבוֹתֵי:

ברוך אַתָּה יְיָ הוֹוֶה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי
הַגֶּפֶן:

ברוך אַתָּה יְיָ הוֹוֶה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר
בָּנוּ מִכָּל עָם, וְרוֹמַמְנוּ מִכָּל לָשׁוֹן, וְקִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו. וַתִּתֵּן לָנוּ יְיָ הוֹוֶה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאַהֲבָה (שְׁבָתוֹת
לְמִנוּחָהּ ו)מוֹעֲדִים לְשִׂמְחָה, חֲגִים וְזִמְנִים לְשִׂשׁוֹן,
(אֶת יוֹם (הַשְּׁבֵת הַזֶּה וְאֶת יוֹם) חַג הַמִּצּוֹת הַזֶּה, זְמַן
חֲרוּתֵנוּ (בְּאַהֲבָה) מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ, זִכָּר לִיצִיאַת מִצְרָיִם,
כִּי בָנוּ בְּחֶרֶת וְאוֹתָנוּ קִדְּשָׁתָּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים, (וְשֵׁבֶת)
וּמוֹעֲדֵי קֹדֶשׁ (בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרִצּוֹן) בְּשִׂמְחָה וּבְשִׂשׁוֹן
הַנִּחַלְתָּנוּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ הוֹוֶה, מְקַדֵּשׁ (הַשְּׁבֵת ו)יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְהַזְּמַנִּים.

KIDDUSH CONTINUES ON THE NEXT PAGE.

On Saturday night, add the following two paragraphs:

Blessed are You, HASHEM, our God, King of the Universe,
Who creates the lights of the fire.

Blessed are You, HASHEM, our God, King of the Universe,
Who distinguishes between the sacred and the profane,
between light and darkness, between Yisrael and the other
peoples, between the seventh day and the six days of labor.
You have made a distinction between the sanctity of *Shabbos*
Shabbos and the sanctity of a holiday, and sanctified the
seventh day over the six days of labor. You have separated
and sanctified Your people Yisrael with Your holiness.
Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who distinguishes between one
sanctity and another.

On all nights conclude here:

Blessed are You, HASHEM, our God, King of the Universe,
Who has kept us alive, and maintained us and enabled us
to reach this time.

The wine should be drunk without delay, while reclining on the left side.

It is preferable to drink the entire cup but at the very least,
most of the cup should be drained.

URECHATZ

The head of the household — according to many opinions, all participants in the Seder —
washes his hands as if to eat bread [pouring water from a cup, twice on the right and twice
on the left], but without reciting a blessing.

KARPAS

All participants take a vegetable other than maror and dip it into salt-water. A piece smaller
in volume than half an egg should be used. The following blessing is recited [with the
intention that it also applies to the maror which will be eaten during the meal] before the
vegetable is eaten.

Blessed are You, HASHEM, our God, King of the Universe,
Who creates the fruit of the soil.

On Saturday night, add the following two paragraphs:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מְאוּרֵי הָאֵשׁ.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמְבָדִיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְחול, בֵּין אור לְחֹשֶׁךְ, בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַמִּים, בֵּין יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי לְשֵׁשֶׁת יָמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה. בֵּין קֹדֶשֶׁת שַׁבָּת לְקֹדֶשֶׁת יוֹם טוֹב הַבְּדִלָּה, וְאֵת יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִשֵּׁשֶׁת יָמֵי הַמַּעֲשֶׂה קֹדֶשֶׁת, הַבְּדִלָּה וְקֹדֶשֶׁת אֶת עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקֹדֶשְׁתָּהּ. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, הַמְבָדִיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְקֹדֶשׁ.

On all nights conclude here:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחֲיִינוּ וְקִיָּמָנוּ וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה.

The wine should be drunk without delay, while reclining on the left side.
It is preferable to drink the entire cup but at the very least,
most of the cup should be drained.

ורחץ

The head of the household — according to many opinions, all participants in the Seder — washes his hands as if to eat bread [pouring water from a cup, twice on the right and twice on the left], but without reciting a blessing.

כרפס

All participants take a vegetable other than maror and dip it into salt-water. A piece smaller in volume than half an egg should be used. The following blessing is recited [with the intention that it also applies to the maror which will be eaten during the meal] before the vegetable is eaten.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה.

YACHATZ

The head of the household breaks the middle matzah in two. He puts the smaller part back between the two whole matzos, and wraps up the larger part for later use as the afikoman. Some briefly place the afikoman portion on their shoulders, in accordance with the Biblical verse (*Shemos* 12:34) recounting that Israel left Egypt carrying their matzos on their shoulders, and say *בְּהָלוֹ יָצְאוּנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם*, "In haste we went out of Egypt."

MAGGID

The broken matzah is lifted for all to see as the head of the household begins with the following brief explanation of the proceedings.

This is the poor bread which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. Let anyone who is hungry come in and eat. Let anyone who is needy come in and make Pesach. This year we are here; next year we will be in the Land of Israel. Now we are slaves; next year we will be freemen.

Exodus. Were they to hear the Jews, they, too, might commence singing.

This explanation also has its difficulties. First of all, *הָא לֶחְמָא* is not a song of praise. If we are worried that the angels might be inspired to sing by hearing the songs of the Jews, the *Hallel* should have been translated [into Aramaic]. Second, it was only during the actual Exodus, because of the deaths of so many Egyptians, that angels were not supposed to sing. There is no reason to presume that they are not to sing on Pesach for all time. Third, the Sages have already told us that the

ministering angels understand all languages.*

Others attribute the Aramaic of *הָא לֶחְמָא עֻנְיָא* to the Babylonian origin of the standard text of the *Haggadah*, but if this were true, surely much more of the *Haggadah* should have been composed in that language.

A variation of the above idea does, however, provide a satisfactory solution to our problem. *הָא לֶחְמָא עֻנְיָא* includes an invitation to the poor to join the *Seder*. As the poor would not be likely to understand Hebrew, the invitation, in order to be effective, would have to be made in the vernacular, which,

[*Here Abarbanel cites two sources. The Talmud (*Sotah* 36b) says that the angel Gavriel taught Yosef all seventy of the world's languages. Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer (Chapter 24) says that Hashem asked the ministering angels to confuse the world's languages with him at the Tower of Babel, also implying that they knew them all. It is difficult to understand, however, why Abarbanel does not address himself to the statement of the Talmud (*Shabbos* 12b) "The ministering angels do not understand the Aramaic language," an idea found also in the *Zohar* (*Hakdamah* 9b).]

יחץ

The head of the household breaks the middle matzah in two. He puts the smaller part back between the two whole matzos, and wraps up the larger part for later use as the afikoman. Some briefly place the afikoman portion on their shoulders, in accordance with the Biblical verse (*Shemos* 12:34) recounting that Israel left Egypt carrying their matzos on their shoulders, and say *בְּהֵלוֹ יֵצְאוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם*, "In haste we went out of Egypt."

מגיד

The broken matzah is lifted for all to see as the head of the household begins with the following brief explanation of the proceedings.

הָא לַחְמָא עָנִיא דִּי אֶכְלוּ אַבְהֶתְנָא בְּאַרְעָא
דְּמִצְרַיִם. כָּל דְּכַפִּין יִיתִי וַיִּכּוֹל, כָּל דְּצָרִיךְ יִיתִי
וַיִּפְסֹח. הַשְׁתָּא הָכָא, לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּאַרְעָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל.
הַשְׁתָּא עֲבָדִי, לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בְּנֵי חוֹרִין.

ⲙⲓⲁⲓ / This Is the Poor Bread

Q Why is this paragraph in Aramaic when all of the rest of the *Haggadah* is in Hebrew?

A The sages of generations past have given various explanations for the recitation of this portion of the *Haggadah* in Aramaic rather than Hebrew. Some have proposed that if an invitation of this sort [*Let anyone who is hungry come in and eat. Let anyone who is needy come in and make Pesach*] had been made in Hebrew, harmful spirits, who do not understand Aramaic, might come and spoil our festivities.

This explanation is difficult to accept for a number of reasons.

First of all, it demands that we believe that there are harmful spirits [whose purpose it is to disturb our *Seder*]. Second, we must believe that they understand the Holy Tongue but not Aramaic. Third, we must believe that they are polite spirits who wouldn't come in to spoil our *Seder* unless they were invited in by the host. But above all, our Sages have already assured us (*Pesachim* 8b), "Those engaged in the performance of a *mitzvah* will come to no harm."

Others suggest that *הָא לַחְמָא עָנִיא* (*This is the poor bread*) is recited in Aramaic so that the ministering angels should not understand it. The ministering angels may not sing their regular song of praise on the night of the

tamei (ritually unclean) can participate in the *Seder*, whereas in ancient times only those ritually pure could partake of the *Korban Pesach*. Thus we begin the *Haggadah* with a discussion of the *matzah*, to stress the absence of the *Korban Pesach* from the contemporary *Seder*. After expressing the deficiency of our *Seder*, we conclude this segment of the *Haggadah* with the prayer *next year we will be in the land of Israel, next year we will be freemen*, in the hope of better *Sedarim* in better times.

Others say that this paragraph is not so much an introduction to the *Haggadah*, as a reenactment of the first *Pesach* in Egypt. At that time, it was during the distribution of the *matzos* at the beginning of the *Seder* — not during the eating of the *Korban Pesach* or the *maror* — that our forefathers, in their haste to leave Egypt, called out to their families: *let anyone who is hungry come in and eat; let anyone who is needy come in and make Pesach*. They went on to explain *this year we are here in Egypt; next year we will be in the land of Israel. This year we are slaves; next year we will be freemen*.

These explanations contain a number of points with which one might take issue, but we will not elaborate upon them here.

The following interpretation seems to me the most satisfying. *הָא לַחֲמַא עֲנִיָּא* is essentially an invitation to the poor. Thus, we commence by announcing that tonight we are all eating *poor bread* so that the poor will feel no

shame in accepting our invitation. Tonight all of us are equal, all of us the sons of freed slaves, eating the food of slaves.

הָא לַחֲמַא עֲנִיָּא also serves to arouse the curiosity of the children to ask *מָה נִשְׁתַּנָּה* (*Why is this night different . . .*) Here we have broken the middle *matzah*, and invited the needy to come join us in eating *matzah* — only to remove the *matzah* from the table immediately thereafter!

Thus we make no mention of the *Korban Pesach*, which is not sacrificed in the Diaspora [i.e., in the absence of the *Beis HaMikdash*], nor of the *maror*, which is not a course of the feast we intend to feed the needy.

We go on to say *let anyone who is needy come in and make Pesach*, referring to the *afikoman*, which is eaten in commemoration of the *Korban Pesach*. We allude to the *afikoman* after the *matzah*, as it is eaten at the conclusion of the meal.

The statement *this year we are here* comes in anticipation of a question one might ask upon hearing an invitation to *come in and make Pesach*. That is, how can one bring the *Korban Pesach* outside of Jerusalem? Doesn't the Torah say (*Devarim* 16:5-6): *You cannot sacrifice the Pesach offering in any of your cities which Hashem has given you. Only in the place where Hashem, your God, will choose to rest His name, there you will sacrifice the Pesach*? In response we say *this year we are here* and we do not intend to make an actual sacrifice, but merely to commemorate it

at the time of the composition of the *Haggadah*, was Aramaic.

Q Why is *matzah* called *poor bread*?
It is no less tasty or poorer in quality than leavened bread.

A A possible answer might be that it is called *poor bread* because it commemorates the poverty of our ancestors in Egypt. But this is not the case. The *matzah* commemorates the redemption of our ancestors rather than their poverty, as the *Haggadah* itself points out further (page 96).

Matzah is called *poor bread* for two reasons. First, on account of its physical qualities. Unlike leavened bread which expands in height and volume, *matzah* remains low and “poor”. Second, *matzah* is the food of the poor. Because it takes longer to digest than leavened bread, *matzah* staves off hunger longer. Knowing this, the Egyptians fed their Jewish slaves *matzah*, as alluded to in the words *which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt*.

Keep in mind that the above are reasons only for *matzah* being called *poor bread*, not for the commandment to eat *matzah* on the night of the *Seder*, which, as the *Haggadah* will explain further on, is meant to commemorate the redemption of the Jews from bondage.

Q The *mitzvah* of recounting the story of the Exodus from Egypt on the night of Pesach has three essential components. As the *Haggadah* itself points out (p. 96): *Rabban Gamliel used to say, whoever has not discussed these three things on Pesach has not fulfilled his obligation, namely: The Korban Pesach (Paschal sacrifice), matzah and maror*. Why then do we begin with a discussion of the *matzah* alone? Furthermore, shouldn't we have opened with the statement of Rabban Gamliel, as it is the basis of the entire *Haggadah*?

This year we are here; next year we will be in the land of Israel. This year we are slaves; next year we will be freemen. This statement is redundant. Furthermore, this is the sort of sentiment that ought to be expressed at the end of the *Haggadah*, where it does in fact appear in the statement (p. 106): *So Hashem, our God and the God of our Fathers, may You enable us to live to other festivals and holidays ... happy in the reconstruction of Your city*. What then is it doing at the *Haggadah's* outset?

A There are those who say that the invitation *let anyone who is hungry come in and eat* is an expression of mourning over the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash*. The term *anyone*, they maintain, implies that nowadays even those who are

The Seder plate is removed and the second of the four cups of wine is poured. The youngest present asks the reasons for the unusual proceedings of the evening.

Why is this night different from all other nights?

1. On all other nights
we eat *chametz* and *matzah*.
On this night — only *matzah*.
2. On all other nights
we eat all kinds of vegetables.
On this night — *maror*.
3. On all other nights
we do not dip even once.
On this night — twice.
4. On all other nights
we eat either sitting straight or reclining.
On this night we all recline.

Seder tray from the table, which precedes the questions? A child would surely be puzzled by this action, which indicates the end of a meal rather than its beginning.

A The *Haggadah* does not have to incorporate into its formal text every question a child would ask, such as why do we remove the *matzah* from the table before the meal. Spontaneous questions are surely to be encouraged at the *Seder*. But there is something unique about these four particular questions which led the Sages to establish them as an integral part of the

Haggadah for young and old alike. That is, their focus upon the internal contradiction of the *Seder*, the intermingling of freedom and bondage.

On the one hand, we dip many times at the meal, a practice of the aristocracy. On the other, we eat *matzah*, the bread of the slave. On the one hand, we recline at the meal, a sign of freedom. On the other, we must eat the *maror*, in its bitterest raw form. The *Korban Pesach*, however, does not fit this motif, as it reflects neither freedom nor bondage. Nor does wine. While it can be the beverage of freemen, it is also drunk by the enslaved, as it says (*Mishlei* 31:6): *Give strong drink to the wretched and wine to the embittered.*

The Seder plate is removed and the second of the four cups of wine is poured. The youngest present asks the reasons for the unusual proceedings of the evening.

מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות?

שֶׁבֶּכַל הַלֵּילוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין חֶמֶץ וּמִצָּה,
הַלֵּילָה הַזֶּה – כָּלוּ מִצָּה.

שֶׁבֶּכַל הַלֵּילוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין שְׂאֵר יִרְקוֹת,
הַלֵּילָה הַזֶּה – מָרוֹר.

שֶׁבֶּכַל הַלֵּילוֹת אֵין אָנוּ מְטְבִילִין אֶפִּילוֹ פֶּעַם אַחַת,
הַלֵּילָה הַזֶּה – שְׁתֵּי פְעָמִים.

שֶׁבֶּכַל הַלֵּילוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין בֵּין יוֹשְׁבֵין וּבֵין מְסֻבִּין,
הַלֵּילָה הַזֶּה – כָּלָנוּ מְסֻבִּין.

with the *afikoman*. We pray, however, that *next year we will be in the Land of Israel* where the sacrifice can be brought properly. We then go on to explain why we are not celebrating Pesach in Jerusalem, and that is because *this year we are slaves*, but we hope that *next year we will be freemen* who will be able to perform the *mitzvah* as it was meant

to be performed.

Thus the concluding remarks *this year we are here etc.* are not essentially a prayer like the blessing *אֲשֶׁר גָּאֲלָנוּ*, which comes at the end of the *Haggadah* and contains a prayer for the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Rather, they naturally flow from those features of the invitation which form the essence of *לֵחֶמָּה עֲנִיָּא*.

מה נשתנה / The Four Questions

Q The Four Questions discuss the departures from normal mealtime practices at the Seder, such as eating *matzah* and *maror*, dipping twice, and reclining.

Why is there no mention

made of other deviations from the norm, such as eating the *Korban Pesach*, drinking the four cups of wine, and washing the hands twice?

Why is there no question about the removal of the

The Seder plate is returned. The matzos are kept uncovered as the Haggadah is recited in unison. The Haggadah should be translated if necessary, and the story of the Exodus should be amplified upon.

We were slaves unto Pharaoh in Egypt, and HASHEM, our God, took us out of there with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. If the Holy One, Blessed is He, had not taken our forefathers out of Egypt, we and our children and our children's children would still be enslaved to Pharaoh in Egypt. Even if all of us were wise, all of us understanding, all of us aged, all of us learned in Torah, we would still be commanded to tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt, and whoever enlarges upon the tale of the Exodus merits praise.

**Why mention it here, as well?
Isn't it possible that even if
Hashem had not taken our
forefathers out of Egypt, He still
might have freed us or our
children?**

After אַפְרַיִם הָיִינוּ has explained to us the dual nature of the night of Pesach, another question remains to be answered. Demonstrations of freedom might be appropriate for those who have actually been redeemed from bondage, but why should we in exile perform them? To this the *Haggadah* replies that *if the Holy One, Blessed is He, had not taken our forefathers out of Egypt, we and our children and our children's children would still be enslaved to Pharaoh* and thus we, too, are beneficiaries of the Exodus.

In saying this, the *Haggadah* does not intend to imply that Hashem could not have taken out some future generation. It simply

means that the Exodus would never have taken place without direct Divine intervention. This can be seen by examining the two possible alternative causes for an Exodus, namely, a desire on the part of Pharaoh to free the Jews or a rebellion by the Jews.

That Pharaoh would never have willingly given up his Jewish slaves is abundantly clear. He stubbornly pursued them even after having suffered the Ten Plagues. His very name indicates meanness of spirit. Pharaoh (פַּרְעֹה) seems to be a contraction of פּוֹעֵל רָע (doer of evil) or פֶּה רָע (evil mouth).

That the Jews were unlikely prospects for revolt is just as clear. Centuries of slavery had imbued them with a submissive nature. They were as likely to rebel against Egypt as a flock of sheep against a lion. The idea that the Jews could not have left Egypt by natural means is also expressed in the verse (*Shemos* 3:19): *I know*

The Seder plate is returned. The matzos are kept uncovered as the Haggadah is recited in unison. The Haggadah should be translated if necessary, and the story of the Exodus should be amplified upon.

עֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ לְפָרַעַה בְּמִצְרַיִם, וַיּוֹצִיאֵנוּ יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִשָּׁם בְּיָד חֲזָקָה וּבְזֵרוֹעַ נְטוּיָה. וְאֵלּוּ
לֹא הוֹצִיא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֶת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם,
הָרִי אָנוּ וּבָנֵינוּ וּבְנֵי בָנֵינוּ מִשְׁעָבָדִים הָיִינוּ לְפָרַעַה
בְּמִצְרַיִם. וְאִפִּילוּ כָּלָנוּ חֲכָמִים, כָּלָנוּ גְבוּרִים, כָּלָנוּ
זְקֵנִים, כָּלָנוּ יוֹדְעִים אֶת הַתּוֹרָה, מִצָּה עָלֵינוּ לְסַפֵּר
בִּיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם. וְכָל הַמִּרְבֵּה לְסַפֵּר בִּיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם,
הָרִי זֶה מִשְׁבַּח.

עֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ / We Were Slaves

Q How does *we were slaves unto Pharaoh ...* answer the Four Questions? The reference to Hashem's taking us out of Egypt with a strong hand and outstretched arm might be seen as alluding to the hurried departure of the Jews, which could be taken as a reply to the question about *matzah*, but no answer whatsoever is given to the questions about *maror*, dipping and reclining.

A עֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ (*We were slaves ...*) explains the internal contradiction of the Seder pointed out in the Four Questions. We perform actions which indicate slavery because at the beginning of this night *we were slaves unto Pharaoh* in Egypt. By the end of the night, however, *Hashem, our God took us*

out of there, thus the expressions of freedom.

Q *If the Holy One, Blessed is He, had not taken our forefathers out of Egypt, we and our children and our children's children would still be enslaved to Pharaoh.* This phrase, too, is a nice explanation for why we celebrate Pesach, but how does it answer the Four Questions?

We and our children and our children's children would still be enslaved to Pharaoh. A similar idea is mentioned later on (p. 98), *In each and every generation one is obligated to view himself as though he had personally gone out of Egypt.* There it serves to explain why today we sing the *Hallel*, the song of praise to Hashem, on the night of Pesach.

An incident took place in which Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Yehoshua, Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah, Rabbi Akiva, and Rabbi Tarfon were reclining in Bnei Brak and recounting the tale of the Exodus from Egypt all that night, until their students came and told them: “Our Rabbis! The time for the recitation of the morning *Sh’ma* has arrived.”

tion of the Land of Israel. Finally, the Exodus was a necessary prelude to the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, through which the *Shechinah* [immanent presence of Hashem] rests among us.

The three terms for scholars which appear at the end of עֲבָדִים חֵיִינוּ correspond to these three benefits. *Even if all of us were wise*, that is, men who understand the forces of the cosmos and could appreciate the supernatural dimensions of God’s relationship

with Israel, even if *all of us* were *understanding*, that is, well versed in human hierarchies and could appreciate the stature acquired by the Jewish people at the time of the Exodus, and even if *all of us* were *learned in Torah* and could properly appreciate the exquisite perfection of what we received at Mount Sinai, *we should still be commanded to tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt*, the source of all of these blessings.

מַעֲשֵׂה / An Incident Took Place

Q Why did the sages of old deny themselves a night’s sleep while recounting the Exodus from Egypt? How did they have the right to impose such discomfort upon themselves when the Torah commands (*Devarim* 16:14): *You shall rejoice in your festival?*

A The sages’ nightlong discussion of the Exodus from Egypt was itself a

reenactment of the Exodus and a fulfillment of the obligation to make oneself appear as though he had personally come out of Egypt. Between the sacrifice of the *Korban Pesach*, with its concomitant commandments, and the preparations for their departure, the Children of Israel were awake all night on the night of the original Pesach. The sages’ endeavor to commemorate this aspect of the Exodus and their engrossment in its discussion was itself an expression of festive rejoicing.

מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר וְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ וְרַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה וְרַבִּי עֲקִיבָא וְרַבִּי טַרְפוֹן שֶׁהָיוּ מְסֻבִּין בְּבֵנֵי בְּרַק, וְהָיוּ מְסַפְּרִים בִּיציאת מצרים כָּל אוֹתוֹ הַלֵּילָה. עַד שֶׁבָּאוּ תַלְמִידֵיהֶם וְאָמְרוּ לָהֶם, רַבּוֹתֵינוּ הִגִּיעַ זְמַן קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע שֶׁל שַׁחֲרִית.

that the king of Egypt will not let you go, and not with a strong hand. The commentators raise the problem that it was the killing of the firstborn, referred to in the Torah as a *strong hand* (*Shemos* 13:3), which, in fact, *was* the immediate cause of the Exodus. The answer is that “strong hand” in the first verse does not refer to the strong hand of Hashem. God is telling Moshe in this verse that He knows that Pharaoh will never let the Jews go of his own accord, nor will they ever escape through their own strong hand; that is, through a rebellion.

In summation, we mention here that we would still be slaves in Egypt were it not for Hashem’s salvation. This is to explain why we perform acts expressing freedom at the *Seder* even while we are still in exile. And thereby we begin to discuss the miraculous nature of the Exodus.

Q What benefit have we in the Diaspora today derived from the Exodus from Egypt?

Isn’t it possible that we would have been better off in Egypt

than in our contemporary exile among Edom and Ishmael? To paraphrase our forefathers (*Shemos* 14:12): We would rather toil for Egypt than die in this wilderness of the nations, with its forced conversions and expulsions, where so many of us come to a bitter end, be it by sword, hunger, or captivity, or worst of all, abandonment of our faith.

Even if all of us were wise, all of us understanding, [all of us aged,] all of us learned in Torah. Why mention only these three terms? Why not mention “men of great intellect [מְשֻׁכִּילִים]” or terms that Yisro used [*Shemos* 18:21] such as “able men” or “men who fear God”?

A The benefit we today derive from the Exodus is threefold. First of all, through the many miracles performed during the Exodus, mankind came to realize that God’s relationship with the Jewish people is unique and supernatural. Second, we possess as an eternal legacy the stature attained by our ancestors through the Exodus and their subsequent habita-

[*Abarbanel’s text apparently did not include the words כָּלֵנוּ זְקֵנִים, *all of us aged*.]

Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah said: "Behold, I am like a seventy-year-old man, yet I have never been privileged to show that the Exodus from Egypt must be said at night until Ben Zoma explained it. It says: 'So that you will remember the day of your departure from Egypt all the days of your life.'¹ 'The days of your life' indicates the days. 'All the days of your life' indicates the nights. The other Sages say, 'the days of your life' indicates the world in its present state. 'All the days of your life' includes the days of the *Mashiach*.

(1) *Devarim* 16:3.

comment. He was appointed *nasi* [head of the Sages] at the age of eighteen, and miraculously took on the appearance of a seventy-year-old man, as would befit his position. Why does he then say, *yet I have never been privileged*, as if he were an elder who has spent long years trying to find a source for the obligation to mention the Exodus in the nightly *Krias Sh'ma*?

A Ben Zoma is one of the few *Tannaim* whom the Talmud does not refer to by their full name. Because Shimon ben Zoma was so much younger than his colleagues, among whom was the illustrious Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah, he was referred to only by his patronymic. Thus, Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah expresses wonder that he, a man upon whose account Hashem performed a miracle, could not arrive at the answer

to the problem solved by his younger colleague.

Q *So that you will remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt all the days of your life (Devarim 16:3).* This verse appears in the context of the *mitzvah* to sacrifice the *Korban Pesach*. How can Ben Zoma and the sages apply it to the *mitzvah* of reciting the *Sh'ma*?

A The *Korban Pesach* in and of itself could not possibly provide a stimulus for the remembrance of the Exodus "all the days of our lives." After all, the sages have enjoined us to discuss its laws for only thirty days prior to the onset of the festival. Thus, Ben Zoma and the other sages understood that this verse is telling us to sacrifice

אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה, הֲרִי אָנִי כְּבֶן שְׁבַעִים
 שָׁנָה, וְלֹא זָכִיתִי שֶׁתֹּאמַר יֵצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם
 בְּלִילוֹת, עַד שֶׁדָּרָשָׁה בֶּן זֹמָא, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, לְמַעַן תִּזְכֹּר
 אֶת יוֹם צֵאתְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ. יְמֵי
 חַיֶּיךָ הַיָּמִים, כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ הַלֵּילוֹת. וְחֻכָּמִים אוֹמְרִים,
 יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ לְהֵבִיא לִימוֹת
 הַמָּשִׁיחַ.

⦿ Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah / רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן עֲזַרְיָה

Q Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah said: Behold, I am like a seventy-year-old man, yet I have never been privileged to show that the Exodus from Egypt must be said at night. This Mishnah* refers to the brief mention of the Exodus in the nightly recitation of the *Sh'ma*, not the *mitzvah* to dwell upon it at length particular to the night of Pesach. What, then, is it doing in the *Haggadah*?

If there were some way to explain Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah's remark as referring to the *mitzvah* of recounting the Exodus unique to Pesach, why wouldn't he be satisfied by the obvious source for the *mitzvah* provided in the verse (*Shemos* 12:42): *It is a night of watchfulness for Hashem to bring them out of the land of Egypt; this night should be kept by the Jews unto Hashem for all generations?*

A Having just said *whoever enlarges upon the tale of the Exodus merits praise*, the *Haggadah* relates the incident of the sages in Bnei Brak and the statement of Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah to illustrate just how important this commandment is. Although Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah is indeed discussing the mention of the Exodus in the nightly *Krias Sh'ma*, from the very fact that this event must be mentioned twice daily or, in the opinion of the other sages, in the time of the *Mashiach*, we can see how central it is to Jewish experience and how laudable it must be to expand upon it on the one night of the year devoted to its discussion.

Q The Talmud [*Berachos* 28a; See also *Rashi*, *Berachos* 12b] tells us that Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah was not actually seventy years old when he made this

[*This passage in the *Haggadah* is quoted from the *Mishnah* in *Maseches Berachos* 1:5.]

Blessed is *HaMakom*. Blessed is He. Blessed is He Who gave the Torah to His people, Israel. Blessed is He. The Torah addresses itself to four sons — one is wise, one is wicked, one is naive, and one is unable to ask.

Torah goes to great length to assure that every individual will find an answer befitting him. Thus, it is only proper that we praise and bless Hashem for this display of kindness.

This brings us to a second point. The discussion of the four sons shows us the richness of the Torah in that every individual can find in it a message particularly meaningful to him. This sets it apart from the works of man, which contain a limited number of messages and are worthless to those not attuned to them. Thus the discussion of the four sons rouses us to praise in that it is a clear illustration of the divine nature of the Torah.

Q Why is Hashem referred to as *HaMakom*?

A Hashem is sometimes referred to as *HaMakom*, "The Place," because of certain qualities He shares with the concept of place or location. First, all things have their natural place. They are at ease when they are in their proper place and in a state of tension when they are

away from it. Similarly, Hashem is the natural home of the soul which longs for attachment to Him. Second, all objects are totally encompassed by their location. Similarly, no aspect of man's existence is hidden from Hashem Who divines our innermost thoughts. Third, an object is on the same level as its place. Similarly, God has put Himself on our level by directing, in His divine providence, every facet of our lives. Fourth, a location is an entity distinct from the object within it. Similarly, Hashem is an entity utterly transcending all else. Fifth, the idea of an object's station, whether it is above or below, falls within the larger concept of location. Similarly, Hashem encompasses all stations. He is *in the heavens above and on the earth below* (*Melachim I* 8:23). He is *enthroned on high, yet looks down upon heaven and earth* (*Tehillim* 113:5-6). This, ultimately, is the reason we refer to Hashem as *HaMakom* at this point in the *Haggadah*. By referring to Him simply as "The Place," without any further description or elaboration, we indicate that despite the praise that we are about to bestow upon Hashem, we acknowledge that the station of His existence is indescribable, His existence itself, unfathomable.

**בְּרוּךְ הַמָּקוֹם, בְּרוּךְ הוּא. בְּרוּךְ שְׁנַתֵּן תּוֹרָה לְעַמּוֹ
יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּרוּךְ הוּא. כְּנִגְדַּ אֲרַבְעָה בָּנִים וְדִבְרָה
תּוֹרָה: אֶחָד חָכָם, וְאֶחָד רָשָׁע, וְאֶחָד תָּם, וְאֶחָד שְׂאִינִי
יֹדֵעַ לִשְׁאוּל.**

the *Korban Pesach* as one element of an ongoing lifelong theme of remembrance of the day of our departure from Egypt which is expressed daily in the reading of the *Sh'ma*.

Q How does Ben Zoma have the right to use the word "all" in the aforementioned phrase to include nights? Had the word been omitted, the implication would have been that remembrance must take place only on some days. Now that it tells us that remembrance must be made on all days, how can Ben Zoma

go beyond that and say that it includes nights as well?

A That the departure from Egypt ought to be mentioned daily can be derived from *Shemos* 12:17 where the commemoration of the Exodus is described as "an everlasting ordinance." Thus Ben Zoma derives that the extra word *all* in the above verse must come to include nights. The other sages, however, view each twenty-four-hour period as an integral unit which ought not be broken down into smaller components and thus prefer to use *all* to include the time of the *Mashiach*.

בְּרוּךְ הַמָּקוֹם / Blessed is HaMakom

Q *Blessed is HaMakom.* Blessed is He. Blessed is He Who gave the Torah to His people, Israel.*
Blessed is He. Why does this precede the discussion of the four sons?

A *Blessed are You, Hashem: teach me Your statutes (Tehillim 119:12).*

The most precious of Hashem's gifts to man is the knowledge of His Torah. Appreciation of the Torah evokes praise and thanksgiving from man.

The discussion of the four sons demonstrates Hashem's concern that the delight of the Torah be accessible to every Jew. By answering the same question four different ways, we see that the

[*Literally, "The Place." A name connoting the all-inclusiveness and constant presence of Hashem (see next question).]

words of praise in keeping with his format.

Finally, we can view the discussion of the four sons as an introduction to the *mitzvah* of recounting the Exodus, in that it tells us that this recounting should not be a mere recapitulation of the facts as they are presented in the Torah, but rather, a meaningful discussion adapted to the needs of the company present at the *Seder*.

Q Why aren't the four sons arranged in a symmetric fashion, with a fool to offset the wise son, or a saint to counter the evil son? As it is, there is no balance between the wise son and the evil one, or the naive son and the one who is unable to ask.

The order of the appearance of the four sons is: wise son, wicked son, naive son, and he who is unable to ask. Why not follow the order in which they are presented in the Torah, which would be: wicked son, he who is unable to ask, naive son, and wise son?

A The four sons have been categorized by the *Haggadah* so as to reflect all the possible motivations for asking a question. The ideal motivation would be to educate and set an example for the listeners by impressing them with the ana-

lytic facility to be gained by study of the Torah. This is the motivation behind the question of the wise son.

The worst motivation for a question is plain antagonism. This lies behind the question of the wicked son.

The most common motivation for a question is the simple desire to know that which one does not know. This is why the naive son asks his question. Thus, in these three categories the *Haggadah* has dealt with all people who would ask questions, and in the one who is unable to ask it deals with all the rest. No other system of classifying questioners would be as comprehensive.

There is another explanation for the classification and order of the four sons. We can say that the sons are, in fact, two symmetric pairs. The wise son is obviously countered by the one who is unable to ask. But the wicked son is also countered by the naive son. The word for naiveté in Hebrew, *temimus*, also connotes perfection. It implies a person in a state of serene simplicity, whole unto himself, uncomplicated by the devious designs of the wicked.

It follows from this that the sons appear in the *Haggadah* in the order of their degree of wisdom. The wise son, steeped in Torah knowledge, comes first. The wicked son with his cunning comes next. He is followed by the less intelligent naive son. Finally, the one who is not even able to ask is mentioned.

Q *The Torah addresses itself to four sons. The earliest point chronologically in the Haggadah's account of the Exodus is at first our ancestors were idolaters* (p. 50), which talks about the events leading up to the exile. Why doesn't it precede the discussion of the four sons, which already touches upon aspects of the actual exile and the subsequent redemption?

A The positioning of the discussion of the four sons in the Haggadah can be understood three ways. First of all, the point of the two preceding sections of the Haggadah, the incident of the sages in Bnei Brak and Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah's endeavor to find a source for mentioning the Exodus every night, were developments upon the idea of *whoever enlarges upon the tale of the Exodus merits praise*. The discussion of the four sons can be viewed as a continuation of this theme. By pointing out that the Torah has provided four alternative methods for the fulfillment of the *mitzvah* of recounting the Exodus, we see just how important a *mitzvah* it is. Only then, after this introduction has been concluded, do we begin to perform the actual *mitzvah* itself by saying *at first our ancestors were idolaters*.

Second, the Mishnah (*Pesachim* 116a) instructs us to begin the discussion of the Exodus with something derogatory about the Jewish people and to conclude with words of praise. The *Gemara* there cites a dispute between Rav and Shmuel regarding what particular derogatory point to commence with. Shmuel maintains that since the topic of discussion is the Exodus, it is only proper that we begin with *we were slaves unto Pharaoh in Egypt*. Rav maintains that the only truly derogatory beginning point could be *at first our ancestors were idolaters*.

The Haggadah reflects both opinions. We start with *we were slaves unto Pharaoh* in accordance with the opinion of Shmuel. We go on to the sections dealing with the sages in Bnei Brak and Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah. This elucidates the theme mentioned at the end of *we were slaves unto Pharaoh* — that it is praiseworthy to retell the story of the Exodus at length. Then we begin with words of praise in *Blessed is HaMakom* and continue with the discussion of the four sons which is similarly a form of praise in that it deals with the departure and redemption from Egypt. After concluding Shmuel's format for the Haggadah, we begin again with *at first our ancestors were idolaters* in accordance with the opinion of Rav and conclude with other

What does the wise son say? "What are the testimonies, the statutes, and the laws which HASHEM, our God, has commanded you?"¹ And you, too, should tell him the laws of Pesach: It is forbidden to eat anything after the *Korban Pesach*."

(1) Devarim 6:20

nature such as *matzah* which commemorates the speed of the departure, and *maror* which commemorates the bitterness of the enslavement. *Statutes* refers to those commandments for which human reason can find no rationale, such as the prohibitions against breaking a bone of the *Korban Pesach* or taking its meat outside the house in which it is to be eaten. *Laws* or literally *judgments* refers to those commandments which appeal to man's sense of propriety such as the exclusion of non-Jews from participating in the *Korban Pesach*, as they were not included in the Exodus. Given that the wise son accepts all of these commandments as being of a divine nature, as he says, *which Hashem, our God, has commanded you*, he asks why are they not all of the same type?

In its answer, the Torah shows how all three categories of commandments are necessary. *We were slaves unto Pharaoh in Egypt, and Hashem took us out of Egypt with a strong hand, and performed signs and wonders* alludes to the idea that the haste of the redemption, the bitterness of the enslavement, and the awesomeness of the killing of the firstborn were all phenomena that

deserve to be commemorated in the *matzah*, *maror*, and *Korban Pesach* respectively. *We are the ones He brought out of there* explains why the commandments of Pesach are exclusive to Jews. Finally, *Hashem commanded us to keep all these statutes . . . for our benefit for all time and to keep us alive as we are today* is saying that while we do not know the reasons behind the *statutes*, neither do we doubt that they are beneficial to us both on the spiritual level (*for all time*) and on the material level (*to keep us alive as we are today*).

When the *Haggadah* says, *tell him the laws of Pesach . . .* it does not mean that we should not give the wise son the answer to his question provided in the Torah. On the contrary, we should surely give him this answer. But since the wise son's question indicates that he is pleased with the clarity of his understanding of the commandments of Pesach, we must not stop with it. We must go on to discuss all of the laws of the *Seder*, down to the very last one, *it is forbidden to eat anything after the Korban Pesach*, to make it clear that the breadth and depth of the subject are such that they are not readily mastered even by the most formidable intellect.

חֲכָם מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר? מָה הָעֵרַת וְהַחֲקִים וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים
אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶתְכֶם? וְאַף אַתָּה
אָמַר לוֹ בְּהִלְכוֹת הַפֶּסַח, אֵין מִפְטִירִין אַחֵר הַפֶּסַח
אֶפִּיקוֹמָן.

חֲכָם / The Wise Son

Q What are the testimonies, the statutes, and the laws? Why does the *Haggadah* understand this question as referring to the specific *mitzvah* of the *Korban Pesach* when it is clear from its context (*Devarim* 6:21) that it is referring to all of the commandments of the Torah? Although the answer to the question given in the Torah (*ibid.* v. 21-25) does mention the Exodus, this in itself is not an indication that the subject of the question was the *Korban Pesach*, as many other commandments of the Torah commemorate the Exodus.

A While there is no doubt that on its simplest level this verse refers to all of the commandments of the Torah, the *Haggadah* nonetheless feels that on a deeper level it alludes in particular to the commandment of the *Korban Pesach* for two reasons. First of all, this is indicated by the fact that the answer to the question given in the Torah deals entirely with the Exodus from Egypt. Secondly the answer contains the phrase *We will take care*

to perform all of this commandment, (*ibid.* v. 25) rather than “all of these commandments,” again indicating that the question refers to one commandment in particular.

Q It is forbidden to eat anything after the *Korban Pesach*. Why doesn't the *Haggadah* answer the question of the wise son with the answer given it in the Torah, *And you will tell your son, We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt . . .*? This answer is to the point, in that it explains what the *mitzvos* are about, whereas the one given in the *Haggadah* doesn't appear to be.

A The answer given the wise son's question in the Torah is even more perfect than we realize. Let us examine the question. The wise son asks about *testimonies*, *statutes*, and *laws* being performed at the *Seder*. He wants to impress us with his wisdom by this logical categorization. *Testimonies* refers to those commandments which are of a commemorative

What does the wicked son say? "What is this service to you?"¹ "To you," but not to himself. Since he excludes himself from the group, he denies everything. You, too, should set his teeth on edge, and say to him: "It is because

(1) *Shemos* 12:26

actually taught the commandment, rarely mentioning the fact explicitly. There is no reason not to assume that here, too, Moshe taught all of the commandments to all of the people. But he had good cause to give special instructions to the elders.

The sheep was the deity of the ancient Egyptians. They held it in awe and treated it with deep respect. Any Egyptian found guilty of "desecrating" a sheep would be put to death. Moshe understood that the Jewish people, just yesterday a nation of slaves, might be afraid to openly slaughter the deity of their former masters and flagrantly daub their doors with its blood. For this reason, Moshe felt it was necessary to exhort the elders to take the lead in the performance of these particular Pesach-related commandments, with their public dimension, to set an example from which the masses could take courage. This exhortation concludes (ibid. v. 24-27): *And you will observe this thing as a statute for you and your sons forever. And it will come to pass when you come to the land which Hashem will give you as He has spoken, you will keep this service. And when your sons will tell you: What is this service to you? You will say: It is a sacrifice of Pesach to Hashem Who passed over*

the houses of the Children of Israel in Egypt.

In this, Moshe is telling the elders that their courageous initiative will earn them eternal glory, for the *Korban Pesach* is not a sacrifice which will be brought on only one occasion, but rather a ritual which will be observed throughout the generations — a ritual designed to arouse the curiosity of their children and provide an opportunity to tell the children of the illustrious role their ancestors played in the Exodus.

That Moshe had chosen the elders for this special task of leading the way was no secret. The rest of the people were well aware of it. But they had no need for any additional encouragement to carry out the word of Hashem. Thus this section of the Torah concludes: *And the people knelt and bowed. And the Children of Israel went and did just as Hashem commanded Moshe and Aharon* (ibid. 27-28). They knelt and bowed as a sign of eagerness to perform God's will, and went ahead and did just as Hashem commanded Moshe and Aharon without waiting for the elders.

In light of the above, we can understand why the Torah introduces the question of the wicked son in the plural, unlike those of

רָשָׁע מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר? מָה הָעֶבֶדָה הַזֹּאת לָכֶם? לָכֶם
וְלֹא לוֹ, וּלְפִי שְׁהוּצִיא אֶת עַצְמוֹ מִן הַכֶּלֶל, כְּפֶר
בְּעֶקֶר – וְאַף אֶתְהָה הַקֵּהָה אֶת שְׁנֵי וְאַמֵּר לוֹ, בְּעֶבֶר

רָשָׁע / The Wicked Son

Q Why is it that the answers to the questions of the wise son, the naive son, and he who is unable to ask are introduced in the Torah in the singular [i.e., *when your son asks you tomorrow (Devarim 6:20); and it will be when your son will ask you (Shemos 13:14); and you will tell your son (ibid. v. 8)*], while the question of the wicked son is introduced in the plural [*and it will be when your sons will tell you (Shemos 12:26)*]?

A To answer this question, we must begin by asking three additional questions about *Shemos*, Chapter 12, in which Hashem instructs Moshe Rabbenu about the sacrifice of the *Korban Pesach*. In verses 1 through 20, Hashem gives Moshe a number of commandments relating to the *Korban Pesach* – the manner in which it is to be set aside and slaughtered, the manner in which it is to be eaten, the prohibition against *chametz*, the prohibition against doing work during the festival, and the directive to put blood on the lintel and doorposts. In verses 21 through 28, we find Moshe commanding the elders to sacrifice the *Korban*

Pesach, but here he mentions only the commandments regarding setting aside and slaughtering the sacrifice and putting the blood on the lintel and doorposts. Why did Moshe fail to mention all of the other *Korban-Pesach*-related commandments?

Second, why did Moshe convey these instructions to the elders alone? Didn't Hashem expressly command (ibid. v. 3): *Speak to the entire assembly of Israel?*

Finally, given that Moshe did direct these instructions only to the elders, why does this section of the Torah conclude (ibid. v. 28): *And the Children of Israel went and did just as Hashem commanded Moshe and Aharon?* When were the Children of Israel informed of these commands?

We can begin our answer to the above questions by stating that it is reasonable to assume that Moshe taught the entire community of Israel all of the laws of *Pesach* and the *Korban Pesach* in full detail. But there is no need for the Torah to mention this. In the case of the vast majority of the 613 commandments, we find Hashem teaching the commandment to Moshe with the instruction to teach it to the Jewish people. But the Torah generally takes for granted that Moshe

of this that HASHEM did so for me when I went out of Egypt.”¹ “For me,” but not for him. Had he been there he would not have been redeemed.

What does the naive son say? “What is this?” Say to him:

(1) *Shemos* 13:8.

This verse (ibid. 13:8) is what the Torah instructs one to tell the son who is unable to ask and in fact the *Haggadah* employs this verse in that son’s answer. Why is it used as the answer for the wicked son?

A The answer given in the Torah to the question of the wicked son responds to both of the charges implicit in his use of the word for “labor” when he means to say “service” [see previous question]. To the charge that the Pesach celebration is not of divine origin we respond: *It is the sacrifice of Pesach to Hashem* — that is to say, He is the One Who bid us to perform it. To the charge that it is not spiritually uplifting we respond: *Who passed over the houses of the Children of Israel in Egypt when He smote Egypt, and saved our houses* — that is to say, the ritual is of a purely religious nature in commemoration of the Exodus. Im-

plicit in this response is the understanding that the *Korban Pesach* must be eaten when one is already full, indicating that we eat it solely for religious reasons, and not just to fill our bellies as the wicked son would prefer to believe.

When the *Haggadah* says, *You, too, should set his teeth on edge and say to him: It is because of this that Hashem did so for me when I went out of Egypt*, it does not mean that we should not respond with the answer to the question given it in the Torah. Rather, as in the case of the wise son, the *Haggadah* means we should give this response in addition to the answer given in the Torah, but only to show our displeasure with his attitude, not as a serious response to the wicked son’s charges. This verse, then, is simply a borrowed phrase when it appears in the context of the reply to the wicked son, whereas the Torah’s true intention is that it be used to instruct the son who is unable to ask.

/ The Naive Son

Q The question of the naive son — *What is this?* — appears in the Torah with regard to the commandment of the

sanctification of the firstborn (ibid. 13:14).

Why does the *Haggadah* construe it as referring to the *Korban Pesach*?

זֶה עֲשֵׂה יְהוָה לִי בְּצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם.¹ לִי וְלֹא לּוֹ, אֱלֹהֵי הָיָה
שֵׁם לֹא הָיָה נִגָּאֵל.

תם מַה הוּא אוֹמֵר? מַה זֹאת? וְאִמְרַת אֱלֹהֵי, בְּחֶזֶק יָד

the other sons. The Torah normally addresses itself to the Jewish people as a whole in the singular as if addressing each and every individual. But the question (ibid. v. 26), which [for reasons to be dealt with later] the *Haggadah* ascribes to the wicked son, is not part of a section of the Torah addressed to the entire nation of Israel. It is part of a section addressed to a specific group, the elders. For this reason the plural term “sons” is used to introduce it.

Q Why did the *Haggadah* interpret the question, “*what is this service to you?*” as being the question of a wicked son? What is wrong with the question? The *Haggadah* implies that it is the use of the term “to you,” whereby he is excluding himself. But the wise son also said “commanded you” and the *Haggadah* does not accuse him of excluding himself from the Jewish people.

A There are three indications that this is the question of the wicked son. First of all, the question of the wise son is prefaced by the phrase, *when your son will ask you* (Devarim 6:20), while this question is prefaced by, *and when your sons will tell you* (Shemos 12:26). The

wise son is asking. He is engaged in a sincere quest for knowledge. Not so the sons of the other verse. They are telling you. They have all the answers. Their question is purely rhetorical, as if to say, “What good is all this to you?”

Second, unlike the wise son, the wicked son does not mention the name of Hashem in his question.

Finally, the word which the wicked son uses for *service* [עֲבוּדָה] also means labor. His choice of this particular term implies that he regards the Pesach celebration as a purely material formality, neither divine in its origin, nor spiritually uplifting in its practice.

All of the above indicate that when the wicked son uses the term *to you*, he, unlike the wise son, intends to exclude himself from the category of those who practice this service.

Q *It is because of this that Hashem did so for me when I went out of Egypt. Why doesn't the Haggadah respond to the wicked son's question with the answer given to it in the Torah (ibid. v. 27), And you will say, It is the sacrifice of Pesach to Hashem Who passed over the houses of the Children of Israel in Egypt when He smote Egypt, and saved our houses?*

“HASHEM took us out of Egypt, from the house of slaves, by strength of hand.”¹

And regarding the one who is unable to ask, you open conversation with him, as it says: “And you will tell your son on that day, saying, ‘It is because of this that HASHEM did so for me when I went out of Egypt.’”²

(1) *Shemos* 13:14. (2) 13:8.

it is being addressed to a basically God-fearing person, sincere in his quest for knowledge, without any taint of antagonism in his question.

Q *It is because of this that Hashem did so for me when I went out of Egypt.* This verse has already been used in the answer to the wicked son. How can it be used twice?

A This is essentially the answer to the son who is unable to ask. In the context of the answer to the wicked son it is merely a borrowed phrase used to make our point in a learned manner. We have elaborated on this above (page 47).

Q Why does the phrase *you, too*, appear in the answers to the wise son and the evil son and not in the answers to the others?

Why do the answers to the questions of the wise son and the wicked son include elements not mentioned in the Torah while the responses to the naive son and to him who is unable to ask are simple quotations of Scriptural passages?

A The simple straightforward answers given in the Torah are all the naive son and the one not able to ask need. The more sophisticated sons need more elaboration, therefore *you, too*, expand on the Torah’s ideas when answering them.

שְׂאִינוּ יוֹדֵעַ לְשַׁאוֹל / The Son Who Is Unable to Ask

Q *We might have held [that we should begin telling the son who is unable to ask* of the re-*

demption from Egypt] from the first of the month, but the Torah tells us: “on that day.” Why does the Haggadah stress that the

[*Abarbanel, unlike most other commentators, considers *we might have held* ... a continuation of the section dealing with the son who is unable to ask. This opinion is also held by Rabbi Elazar Rokeach (Germany c. 1160-1238) in his commentary on the *Haggadah* (Jerusalem, 5744).]

הוֹצִיאָנוּ יְהוָה מִמִּצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עַבְדִּים.¹

וְשִׂאֵינוּ יוֹדֵעַ לְשִׂאוֹל, אֶת פֶּתַח לוֹ. שְׂנֵאֲמֵר, וְהִגֵּדָה
לְבִנְךָ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר, בַּעֲבוּר זֶה עָשָׂה

יְהוָה לִי בִצְאָתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם.²

A In *Shemos* 13:2, Hashem commands Moshe regarding the sanctification of the firstborn – *Sanctify unto Me all the firstborn. Whatever opens the womb among the Children of Israel, both of man and beast, is Mine.* We would expect Moshe to immediately convey this commandment to the Jewish people. Instead, he goes on to review the prohibition against eating *chametz* on Pesach and the commandment to eat *matzah*, and to introduce the *mitzvah* of *tefillin*. Not until verse 11 does he get to the sanctification of the firstborn, which is followed by the question of the son, *What is this?* Why this lengthy interlude? The answer lies at the beginning of this portion of the Torah. Verse 3 reads: *And Moshe said to the people, Remember this day on which you have gone out of Egypt from the house of slaves, for with a strong hand Hashem has taken you out of here, and chametz should not be eaten.* The sanctification of the firstborn is intended to commemorate the killing of the firstborn (*with a strong hand*), which is itself part of the broader theme of commemoration of the Exodus. Moshe introduces this *mitzvah* by listing other *mitzvos* that share its basic motif to stress the centrality of this idea to the Jewish faith.

Thus, when the son asks, *What is this?*, he is not referring to the sanctification of the firstborn alone but to the whole idea of commemorating the Exodus and all of its concomitant *mitzvos*.

Q Why does the *Haggadah* attribute the question, “*What is this?*” to the naiveté and innocence of the one asking? Perhaps he has the same thing in mind as the wicked son who asked, *What is this service to you?*

A The Torah gives a straightforward answer to the question, “*What is this?*” in verse 15: *When Pharaoh hardened himself against sending us away, Hashem killed all of the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of man to the firstborn of beast. Therefore I sacrifice unto Hashem all males that open the womb, and all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.* But the Torah does not stop there. Verse 16 reads: *It shall be a sign upon your hands and phylacteries between your eyes, because by strength of hand Hashem took us out of Egypt.* The tone of confidence in the performance of *mitzvos* which characterizes this appendage shows that

We might have held [that we should begin telling the son who is unable to ask of the redemption from Egypt] from the first of the month, but the Torah tells us: “On that day.” Since it says “on that day,” we might have held that we should begin while it is still day. But the Torah says: “Because of *this*.” I only say “because of *this*” at a time when *matzah* and *maror* are placed before you.

At first our ancestors were idolaters, but now *HaMakom* has brought us close to His worship, as it says: “And Yehoshua said to all of the people, So says HASHEM the God of Israel, Of old, your ancestors dwelt beyond the river — Terach, the father of Avraham and the father of Nachor, and they worshiped other gods. And I took your father Avraham from beyond the river, and I led him throughout all the Land of Canaan, and I multiplied his seed, and I gave Yitzchak unto him, and I gave Yaakov and Esav unto Yitzchak, and I gave unto Esav Mount Seir to inherit, and Yaakov and his sons went down to Egypt.”¹

(1) Yehoshua 24:2-4.

His worship, need no Scriptural backing?

What need is there to mention Terach and Nachor in the story of the Exodus? While it is true that the Talmud says [*Pesachim* 116a] that the recounting of the story must commence with a reference to the humble beginnings of the Jewish people, this has already been taken care of when we said *we were slaves unto Pharaoh in Egypt*.

And I gave unto Esav Mount Seir. Why did Yehoshua need to mention Esav in his address to the Jewish people? If for some reason he felt he had to discuss all of the

offspring of Yitzchak, why not discuss as well the offspring of Avraham, such as Yishmael and the sons of Keturah?

A If we examine this section of the *Haggadah* carefully, we will find that ample Scriptural support is being brought for *now HaMakom has brought us close to His worship* as well as *at first our ancestors were idolaters*. One of the most important lessons we should derive from the *Seder* is an appreciation of Hashem as the source of all goodness and kindness. These brief remarks of Yehoshua provide clear

יכול מֵרָאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ, תִּלְמוּד לֹמֵר בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא. אִי בַּיּוֹם
הַהוּא, יָכוֹל מִבְּעוֹד יוֹם, תִּלְמוּד לֹמֵר בְּעֶבֶר
זֶה. בְּעֶבֶר זֶה לֹא אִמְרָתִי אֶלָּא בְּשַׁעַה שֵׁשׁ מִצָּה
וּמְרוֹר מִנְּחִים לְפָנֶיהָ.

מִתַּחֲלָה, עוֹבְדֵי עֲבוּדָה זָרָה הָיוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, וְעִכְשָׁו
קִרְבָּנוּ הַמָּקוֹם לַעֲבוּדָתוֹ. שְׁנֵאמַר, וַיֹּאמֶר
יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל כָּל הָעָם, כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל,
בְּעֶבֶר הַנֶּהָר יֵשְׁבוּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם מֵעוֹלָם, תָּרַח אָבִי אֲבִרָהָם
וְאָבִי נָחוֹר, וַיַּעֲבְדוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים. וְאָקַח אֶת אֲבִיכֶם
אֶת אֲבִרָהָם מֵעֶבֶר הַנֶּהָר, וְאוֹלָךְ אוֹתוֹ בְּכָל אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן,
וְאַרְבֶּה אֶת זֶרְעוֹ, וְאָתָן לוֹ אֶת יִצְחָק. וְאָתָן לְיִצְחָק אֶת
יַעֲקֹב וְאֶת עֵשָׂו, וְאָתָן לְעֵשָׂו אֶת הָר שֶׁעִיר לָרֶשֶׁת
אוֹתוֹ, וַיַּעֲקֹב וּבְנָיו יָרְדוּ מִצְרָיִם.¹

**commandment applies only on
the night of Pesach with regard
to the son who is unable to ask,
but not with regard to the others?**

A The Exodus from Egypt
is one of the basic funda-
mentals of the Jewish
faith. While the night of the *Seder*
has been designated as a special
evening devoted to its discussion

and reenactment, it would be neg-
ligent of parents to limit educating
their children about the Exodus to
that night alone. This is not the
case, however, with regard to the
son who is unable to ask. Lacking
any capacity for abstraction, this
son is best instructed only when
concrete items, such as *matzah*
and *maror*, are placed before him.

☞ **מִתַּחֲלָה עוֹבְדֵי עֲבוּדָה זָרָה הָיוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ** /

At First Our Ancestors Were Idolaters

Q The *Haggadah* found it
necessary to adduce sup-
port for the statement,
*at first our ancestors
were idolaters*. It found such sup-

port in the words of Yehoshua: *Of
old, your ancestors dwelt beyond
the river . . . Why, then, does the
following phrase, but now
HaMakom has brought us close to*

ensure that the choicest of all lands, the Holy Land, would remain the exclusive domain of Yaakov.

But the pattern of selecting one brother over another ends. *And Yaakov and his sons went down to Egypt.* Yaakov and his sons, all of his sons, were entrusted with Hashem's mission. Terach, Avraham, and Yitzchak all had sons who put a barrier between their hearts and Hashem. Not so Yaakov. Though he had twelve sons, all of them were chosen by Hashem. All of them directed their hearts toward Hashem. All of them were the foundation and pillars of the Jewish nation.

Q *And Yaakov and his sons went down to Egypt.*

This makes it sound as if they went of their own volition, whereas, in fact, they went because of Hashem's decree at the Covenant Between the Parts. This is stated explicitly further on in the *Haggadah* – and he went down to Egypt – forced by Hashem's word. We must determine if the descent to Egypt was the result of volition or coercion, and if coercion, was it a punishment for some sin, which itself must be identified, or the result of some other cause?

The statement that Esav inherited Mount Seir would have been properly counterbalanced by saying that Yaakov and his sons inherited the Land of

Canaan. Instead Yehoshua says, *Yaakov and his sons went down to Egypt*, making it appear as a sign of love toward Esav and dislike toward Yaakov. This is just the opposite of words of the prophet (*Malachi 1:2-3*), *And I love Yaakov and I hate Esav.*

A The exile of Yaakov and his family to Egypt is a complex phenomenon. In order to understand this particular passage of the *Haggadah* we must examine it from more than one perspective.

On the one hand, the exile to Egypt must be seen as a punishment. The sons of Yaakov committed a grave sin through unjustifiably hating Yosef, throwing him into the pit, and selling him as a slave. Though Reuven did not participate in the sale of his brother, he, too, was nonetheless guilty of hating him and coming up with the idea of casting him into the pit.

Sin necessitates retribution. Since the brothers caused Yosef and his descendants to be exiled to Egypt, it was proper that they and their descendants should be banished to Egypt. Since they committed their disgraceful deed while tending their flocks, divine justice demanded that they come to Egypt on account of their sheep, as it says (*Bereishis 47:4*): *We have come to sojourn in the land for there is no pasture for the sheep of your slaves because the famine is severe in the Land of Canaan.* Because the brothers threw Yosef into the pit, Pharaoh decreed that

illustration of Hashem's benevolence toward our forefathers.

Our father Avraham was not originally a great landowner. Neither was he originally a believer in Hashem. Nor was he the father of a family. These verses from Yehoshua refer to these three defects. *Of old, your ancestors dwelt beyond the river – Terach, the father of Avraham and the father of Nachor* teaches us that the descendants of Shem the son of Noach all lived in Babylonia away from the Land of Canaan, on the other side of the Euphrates, up to the time of Terach, whose son Avraham sprang forth to become *the father of a throng of nations* (Bereishis 17:5).

Both Terach and Nachor are specifically involved in the Torah's reference to Avraham's second defect, that he was not originally a believer in Hashem. *And they worshiped other gods* – This refers specifically to Terach and Nachor, as their ancestors were all righteous men. How natural it would have been for Avraham to follow in the footsteps of his father and elder brother! The third defect is alluded to when we contrast the way the Torah speaks of the migrations of Avraham and Yaakov. In Yaakov's case the Torah says, *and Yaakov and his sons went down to Egypt*. In Avraham's case, any mention of sons is conspicuously absent. But, in His great kindness, Hashem had pity on Avraham and rectified all of his defects. *And I took your father, Avraham* – Though Avraham and Nachor were brothers, it was

Avraham whom I chose to worship Me and be My precious one. This is the supreme kindness, for no man can approach his Creator unless the Creator draws him near. This is the first of Hashem's benefactions mentioned in the Scriptural passage and the one the *Haggadah* refers to when it says *but now HaMakom has brought us close to His worship*.

The second of Hashem's gifts to Avraham is mentioned in *and I led him throughout all the land of Canaan*. Hashem led him through the land as an act of taking possession, rendering Avraham the owner of the land for all time.

The prophet goes on to say, *and I multiplied his seed*, underscoring the miraculous nature of the third benefaction. Not only were Avraham and Sarah a barren couple who had children in their old age, but their offspring multiplied at an extraordinary pace.

And I gave Yitzchak unto him tells us that the blessing *and I multiplied his seed* was fulfilled only through Yitzchak. Though the other children of Avraham were more numerous, it was Yitzchak who was his true successor.

And I gave Yaakov and Esav unto Yitzchak. And I gave unto Esav Mount Seir to inherit – Just as Hashem chose Avraham over his brother Nachor and Yitzchak over his brothers Yishmael and the sons of Keturah, so He chose Yaakov over Esav, but in this case He went even further. Not only did He choose Yaakov, He *gave unto Esav Mount Seir to inherit* to

Blessed is He Who keeps His promise to Israel. Blessed is He. For the Holy One, Blessed is He, calculated the end [of the exile], to do as He said to Avraham our father at the Covenant Between the Parts, as it is said, "And He said

were true prophets. In His infinite wisdom He saw that the most efficient way of doing this was by performing supernatural wonders in the breeding ground of false beliefs, Egypt. He would send a nation into that land and send His prophet to take them out. He would have the King of Egypt stubbornly refuse to release the nation so that He could perform more and more wonders against him.

The nation which He would miraculously take out of Egypt would receive His Torah and proclaim His faith to mankind. They would be His most precious nation, the special objects of His Providence. As Avraham had already begun the fulfillment of this mis-

sion, Hashem chose his descendants to be the vehicle for its completion. Viewed in this way, the exile can be seen as a benefaction from Hashem, a necessary step in the spiritual evolution of the Jewish people. It is the means by which they achieved their holiness and ultimately acquired the Land of Israel. Thus the juxtaposition of *I gave unto Esav Mount Seir to inherit, with Yaakov and his sons went down to Egypt* is not a sign of favor toward Esav. On the contrary, it implies that He granted Esav Mount Seir so as to leave the Land of Israel free for the Jewish people who took a significant step toward acquiring it by going down to Egypt.

ברוך שומר הבטחתו לישראל /

Blessed Is He Who Keeps His Promise to Israel

Q Why does the *Haggadah* give a blessing to Hashem for fulfilling His promise to Israel? A blessing would be appropriate where one could have done wrong but chose to do right, but Hashem is the very epitome of truth. Why does the *Haggadah* bless Him for this? Could the Judge of the entire world possibly do injustice and not

keep His word?

A We are not blessing Hashem here for keeping His word. The emphasis here is on *to Israel*. Hashem's promise was given to our forefather Avraham. He could have fulfilled it through Yishmael or the sons of Keturah. Instead He fulfilled it through the descendants of Yitzchak. For this we bless Him in eternal gratitude.

בְּרוּךְ שׁוֹמֵר הַבְּטָחוֹתוֹ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּרוּךְ הוּא. שֶׁהַקְדוֹשׁ
בְּרוּךְ הוּא חָשַׁב אֶת הַקֶּץ, לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּמָה שֶׁאָמַר
לְאַבְרָהָם אֲבִינוֹ בְּבְרִית בֵּין הַבְּתָרִים, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, וַיֹּאמֶר

their sons be thrown into the Nile.

Yosef, too, was guilty, for he had behaved arrogantly toward his brothers and slandered them to their father.

Even Yaakov might be seen as being to some degree at fault as he instilled rivalry and enmity among his sons by favoring Yosef. Thus, Yosef and Yaakov were also worthy of punishment.

Binyamin presents us with a problem as he was in no way party to the sin of selling Yosef. Moreover, the Talmud tells us that he was so saintly that he would have been worthy of immortality had it not been for the sin of Adam which brought the curse of death upon the entire human race (*Shabbos* 56b). In his case we must ascribe the punishment to that attribute of divine justice which demands that an individual who is part of a group which is worthy of punishment be punished along with the group, even if the particular individual is innocent of the particular sin.

When viewed from this perspective, the exile of Yaakov and his sons to Egypt was indeed decreed by Hashem. However, as the decree was a punishment for a sin which was committed through free will, it can be seen in a sense as the result of human volition. Thus the Prophet uses the phrase *and Yaakov and his sons went down to Egypt* to imply that their sin was

the root cause of the exile.

This is not contradicted by Hashem's having informed Avraham of the exile at the Covenant Between the Parts. There Hashem was not decreeing the exile, but rather predicting it. In response to Avraham's question as to when he would acquire the Land of Canaan, Hashem explained that there would be a considerable delay as his descendants would have to suffer exile as punishment for their sin.

When viewed from another perspective, we can see the exile of Yaakov and his family as an expression of Hashem's loving-kindness to the Jewish people.

The greatest good that man can attain is the recognition and appreciation of Hashem and His providence. This is the ultimate purpose of Creation.

Our forefather Avraham was born into a world in which the vast majority of inhabitants did not believe that there was a primary source of Creation. Even those who did, generally believed that He did not involve Himself with the life of man on earth. The hotbed of these notions was Egypt.

When the light of Avraham began to shine in the world and he began to spread the faith of the true God, Hashem decided to bring even more benefit to mankind by demonstrating that His prophets

to Avram, Know that your offspring will be a stranger in a land not theirs, and they will serve them and they will torment them for four hundred years. But also the nation whom they will serve I will judge. Afterward, they will go out with great possessions.”¹

The matzos are covered and the cups lifted as the following paragraph is proclaimed joyously. Upon its conclusion, the cups are put down and the matzos are uncovered.

It [the Covenant Between the Parts] has stood firm for our fathers and for us. For it was not one alone who rose against us to annihilate us, but in every generation there are those who rise against us to annihilate us. But the Holy One, Blessed is He, saves us from their hand.

(1) Bereishis 15:13-14.

וְהָיָה שְׁעֵמֶדָה / It [the Covenant Between the Parts] Has Stood Firm for Our Fathers and for Us

Q From the following passage of the *Haggadah*, go and ascertain, it is clear that the *Haggadah* understands that Yaakov was saved from Lavan only because of the Covenant Between the Parts. Doesn't the Torah indicate that Yaakov was saved because of the justice of his cause in his struggle with Lavan, as the angel told him (Bereishis 31:12): *Because I have seen all that Lavan is doing to you*, and as Yaakov himself said (ibid. 31:42): *God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands and He rebuked you last night?*

A Though Yaakov was definitely justified in his dispute with Lavan, the way in which he manipulated the breeding of his flocks contained an element of deviousness which did not befit him.* Thus, he, too, needed the help of Hashem's covenant with Avraham to prevail in his struggle.

Q *In every generation there are those who rise against us to annihilate us.* This implies that the Covenant Between the Parts protects us in the present exile. But how can this be so? All Hashem promised to Avraham in the Covenant was that He would redeem his children from

[*In his commentary to Bereishis 31-32, Abarbanel does not seem to impute to Yaakov any aspect of wrongdoing in this manipulation.]

לְאַבְרָם, יָדַע תִּדַּע בִּי גֵר יִהְיֶה זֶרַעַךְ בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא
 לָהֶם, וְעַבְדּוּם וְעָנּוּ אֹתָם, אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה. וְגַם
 אֶת הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר יַעֲבֹדוּ דָן אֲנִכִּי, וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן יֵצְאוּ בִּרְכָשׁ
 גָּדוֹל!

The matzos are covered and the cups lifted as the following paragraph is proclaimed joyously. Upon its conclusion, the cups are put down and the matzos are uncovered.

וְהִיא שְׁעִמָּדָה לְאַבּוֹתֵינוּ וְלָנוּ, שֶׁלֹּא אֶחָד בְּלִבָּר עָמַד
 עָלֵינוּ לְכַלּוֹתָנוּ. אֲלָא שְׁבָכַל דּוֹר וָדוֹר עוֹמְדִים
 עָלֵינוּ לְכַלּוֹתָנוּ, וְהַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְצִילָנוּ מִיָּדָם.

Q *For the Holy One,
 Blessed is He, calculated
 the end [of the exile].*

This implies that Hashem eagerly awaited arriving at the total of four hundred years so that He could free the Jewish people. Why then does the Torah say (Shemos 12:40): And the dwelling of the Children of Israel which took place in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years? The question is compounded by the fact that, in reality, the Jews spent only two hundred and ten years in Egypt [see Rashi, ibid.].

A The Jewish people did in fact spend only two hundred and ten years in Egypt. However, the figure of four hundred years mentioned at the Covenant Between the Parts did not refer to the duration of the bondage alone but rather to the

entire time that Avraham's descendants would be living in a land not theirs. This period began during the lifetime of Yitzchak and would have ended thirty years before the Jewish people actually left Egypt. However, since the Jewish people were guilty of idolatry in Egypt, they were not worthy of redemption when the decree had expired, and had to suffer an additional thirty years of enslavement.

At this point, let us take note of a remarkable consistency in the pattern of Jewish history; that is, the recurrence of periods of approximately four hundred and thirty years. The wanderings of the descendants of Avraham took, as we have mentioned, four hundred and thirty years. The Jews lived in the Land of Israel for four hundred and forty years before the construction of the First Temple. The First Temple stood for 427 years. Finally, the Second Temple stood for 428 years.*

[* According to the generally accepted talmudic and midrashic sources, the First Temple stood 410 years, and the Second 420.]

Go and ascertain what Lavan the Aramite intended to do to Yaakov our father, for Pharaoh decreed destruction only for the males, but Lavan intended to eradicate all. As it is said, “An Aramite would destroy my father, and he went down to Egypt, and he sojourned there with few people, and he became there a nation, great, mighty, and formidable.”¹

(1) *Devarim* 26:5

אֶרְמִי אֶבֶד אֲבִי /

An Aramite Would Destroy My Father

Q *Lavan intended to eradicate all. What is the Haggadah’s source for this? All Lavan said was (Bereishis 31:29): I have it in my power to do evil unto you. He did not say that he actually intended to do Yaakov harm, merely that he had the capability to do so. If the Haggadah is basing its assertion solely on the passage (Devarim 26:5): An Aramite would destroy my father, this is not the literal meaning of the verse. It simply means: My father was a wandering Aramite, an allusion to our forefather Yaakov’s humble beginnings in Aram.*

A After saying *I have it in my power to do evil unto you*, Lavan goes on to say, *But the God of your father said to me last night: Guard yourself that you not speak to Yaakov good or bad*. Hashem’s warning to Lavan indicates that he had evil intentions toward Yaakov. Furthermore, Lavan goes on to tell Yaakov

(Bereishis 31:43): *The daughters are my daughters, the sons are my sons, and the flocks are my flocks. And all that you see is mine*. This shows us that Lavan’s evil designs were not directed toward Yaakov alone, but toward his family and possessions as well.

Q *Why doesn’t the Haggadah mention Hashem’s deliverance of Yaakov from the hands of his murderous brother Esav? Surely the Torah dwells at greater length upon this incident and states it more explicitly than it does the deliverance from Lavan.*

A Hashem’s deliverance of Yaakov from Esav was not the result of the Covenant Between the Parts. The Covenant protects the Jewish people from adversaries who are not of the seed of Avraham, whereas Esav was his biological descendant. Furthermore, unlike Lavan,

צא וְלִמַּד מֶה בִּקֵּשׁ לָבֶן הָאֲרָמִי לַעֲשׂוֹת לִיעֲקֹב אָבִינוּ,
שְׁפָרְעָה לֹא גִזֹּר אֶלָּא עַל הַזְּכָרִים, וְלָבֶן בִּקֵּשׁ לַעֲקֹר
אֶת הַכֹּל. שְׁנֵאמַר:
אֲרָמִי אֲבִד אָבִי, וַיֵּרֶד מִצְרַיִמָּה וַיִּגֶר שָׁם בְּמִתֵּי מֵעֵט,
וַיְהִי שָׁם לְגֹוי, גְּדוֹל עֲצוּם וְרַב.¹

bondage and bring them to the Land of Canaan, a pledge that was fulfilled completely thousands of years ago.

A It is evident from the Written and Oral Torah that the Covenant Between the Parts is in effect throughout the history of the Jewish people. In the text of the Covenant as it appears in the Torah, Hashem promises Avraham to give his descendants the lands of ten nations. We know that when the Jewish people entered Canaan they conquered the lands of only seven nations. The other three, the Kenite, Kenizite, and Kadmonite nations, will not be conquered until the final redemption [see *Yerushalmi Kiddushin* I:5]. Furthermore, the Sages found allusions to all of the exiles of the Jewish nation, including our present exile, in the Covenant Between the Parts (*Bereishis Rabbah* 44:20).

Q Pharaoh decreed destruction only for the males. Doesn't the Torah say (*Shemos*

15:9): *The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will distribute the plunder, my lust will be sated by them, I will draw my sword, my hand will destroy them, implying that he wanted to destroy the entire Jewish nation?*

A Pharaoh never intended to annihilate the entire Jewish nation.* While the Jews were in Egypt, it is clear that his decree extended only to male children. Even when he was in pursuit of them at the Red Sea, he did not intend to kill them all. *I will distribute the plunder* indicates that he intended to recover and return the wealth which the Jews took with them from Egypt. *My lust will be sated by them* indicates that he intended to take young Jewish men and women for slaves to do with them as he pleased. Only with regard to Moshe and the rest of the people did he say *I will draw my sword, my hand will destroy them*.

[*The text of Abarbanel's *Haggadah* read: וְדוֹר עוֹמְדִים שְׁכַבְל דּוֹר אֶלָּא עָלֵינוּ צָמַד בְּלִבְדּוֹר אֶחָד בְּלִבְדּוֹר עָלֵינוּ לְכַלּוֹתֵינוּ. *For it was not one alone who rose against us, but in every generation there are those who rise against us to annihilate us.* The first mention of לְכַלּוֹתֵינוּ to annihilate us is absent from his version.]

“And he went down to Egypt” – forced by HASHEM’s word.

“And he sojourned there” – This teaches us that Yaakov our father did not go down to settle permanently in Egypt, but merely to sojourn there, as it is said, “And they said to Pharaoh, We have come to sojourn in the land, for there is no pasture for the sheep of your servants,

buried with his ancestors in the Cave of Machpelah. On a national level, it is an assurance that the Jewish people will leave Egypt in a manner that will clearly exhibit divine intervention. *And Yosef will put his hands over your eyes* (ibid.)

– On an individual level, this is an assurance that Yaakov’s beloved son Yosef will not die in his lifetime. On a national level, we must understand the word *Yosef* not as a proper noun but as meaning “he who will increase”; that is, an allusion to Moshe who will increase the glory and holiness of the Jewish people. In this sense, the

verse is saying that Moshe will put his hands over the eyes of the Jews, in a manner of speaking, to illuminate them with the light of the Torah.

Thus, Yaakov was indeed *forced by Hashem’s word* when he went to Egypt, not forced to go there but forced to settle there. The *Haggadah* does not adduce Scriptural support to this point because it would involve quoting and explicating the relatively lengthy passage we have just discussed, unlike the following interpretations of verses which can be supported by brief quotations.

וַיֵּרָד / And He Sojourned There

Q This passage refers to the period when Yaakov actually lived in Egypt. Why then does the

Haggadah interpret it as referring to his intentions when he embarked upon his journey?

A If this passage referred only to the time when Yaakov actually lived in Egypt, considering the length of the Jewish people’s stay there, the term וַיֵּשֶׁב שָׁם, “and he dwelt

there,” should have been used. *And he sojourned* (וַיֵּרָד) *there* connotes transience, which better applies to what Yaakov intended rather than to what actually happened.

Q *We have come to sojourn in the land.* The sons of Yaakov told this to Pharaoh on Yosef’s instructions as part of a ruse to get Pharaoh to allow them to settle

וַיֵּרֶד מִצְרַיִם – אָנוּס עַל פִּי הַדְּבוּר.

וַיֵּגֶר שָׁם – מִלֵּמַד שֶׁלֹּא יֵרֶד יַעֲקֹב אֲבִינוּ לְהַשְׁתַּקֵּעַ
בְּמִצְרַיִם, אֲלֵא לָגוּר שָׁם. שְׁנֵאמַר, וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל פְּרֹעֶה,
לָגוּר בְּאַרְץ בְּאֵנוּ, כִּי אֵין מְרַעָה לְצֹאן אֲשֶׁר לַעֲבָדֶיךָ.

Esav was interested in killing Yaakov alone and meant no harm to his family.

Q “*And he went down to Egypt*” – forced by Hashem’s word. How can the *Haggadah* say that Yaakov was forced to go to Egypt when he did so joyously in anticipation of his reunion with Yosef, as he said (ibid. 45:28): “*Yosef my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die*”?

Why does the *Haggadah* simply assert that Yaakov was forced by God to go down to Egypt without supporting the assertion with any Scriptural texts? All of the following interpretations of verses are backed by supporting texts.

A When our father Yaakov first heard that Yosef was alive, his first reaction was to say “*I will go and see him before I die*,” as we have mentioned above. It is therefore difficult to understand why, after Yaakov had already embarked upon his journey, Hashem had to reassure him (ibid. 46:2): *Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt*.

There was, however, ample ne-

cessity for this reassurance. Yaakov did not originally intend to live in Egypt. He merely wanted to see his beloved son once again and then get on with the task of settling the Land of Canaan. It was only after he had already embarked upon his journey that Hashem informed Yaakov that His plans for the Jewish people required a prolonged stay in Egypt. This, then, called for the reassurance *Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt*. Hashem goes on to give Yaakov further reassurance. *For I will make you a great nation there* – On a personal level, this is a promise that the mass migration of Yaakov’s family will not lead to a diminution of their number. On a national level, it is a pledge that the Jews will maintain their identity as a distinct nation throughout the years of exile. *I will descend with you to Egypt* (ibid. v. 4) – On a personal level, this is meant to allay Yaakov’s fear that moving to Egypt would weaken the intensity of Hashem’s relationship to him. On a national level, it is an assurance that the idolatrous impurity of Egypt would not prevent Hashem from demonstrating there His special relationship to the Jewish nation. *And I will also bring you up* (ibid.) – This is an assurance that Yaakov will be

for the famine is severe in the Land of Canaan. And now, may your servants please live in the Land of Goshen.”¹

“**With few people**” — as it is said, “With seventy souls your fathers went down to Egypt, but now HASHEM, your God, has made you numerous as the stars of the heavens.”²

“**And he became there a nation**” — This teaches us that the Jews were distinguishable there.

(1) Bereishis 47:4. (2) Devarim 10:22

If the *Haggadah* is interested in showing the correspondence between the verses in the Torah that relate the story of the exile and Exodus and those in *Devarim* which recapitulate it in the *viduy bikurim* [the verses from the Torah recited when bringing the first fruits to the Temple], why did the *Haggadah* choose the central role for the verses from *viduy bikurim*, and use the actual narrative only as support? Would it not have been more appropriate to focus primarily

upon the narrative itself?

A The *Haggadah* focuses on the text of *viduy bikurim* because it was designed for recitation. All people bringing their *bikurim* [first fruits] had to recite this text in the Temple in the presence of a *kohen* [priest]. The additional verses from other books of the Torah are not brought as proofs but as explanations, each of them containing an important element of the story of the Exodus not evident from the text of *viduy bikurim*.

וַיְהִי שָׁם לְגוֹי / And He Became There a Nation

Q This teaches us that the Jews were distinguishable there. The *Haggadah* adduces no source or supporting text for this Scriptural interpretation as it does for others in this series. What then is its basis?

A The verse brought by the *Haggadah* after *great, mighty* — namely: *and*

the Children of Israel were fruitful and fertile — is also the supporting text for *this teaches us that the Jews were distinguishable there*. The very fact that through the 210 years of their servitude in Egypt the Jewish people were referred to by their own particular name, *Children of Israel*, indicates that they were able to preserve a distinct culture.

כִּי כִבֵּד הִרְעֵב בְּאַרְצוֹ כְּנָעַן, וְעַתָּה יֵשְׁבוּ נָא עַבְדֶּיךָ
בְּאַרְץ גֹּשֶׁן.¹

בְּמַתִּי מַעֲט – כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, בְּשִׁבְעִים נֶפֶשׁ יָרְדוּ
אֲבֹתֶיךָ מִצְרַיִמָּה, וְעַתָּה שְׁמֶךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כְּבוֹכְבִּי
הַשָּׁמַיִם לָרֹב.²

וַיְהִי שֵׁם לְגוֹי – מִלְּמַד שֶׁהָיוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל מְצִינִים שָׁם.

in the land of Goshen. How can the *Haggadah* use it as an indication of Yaakov's actual intentions?

A Though Yosef and his brothers did indeed try to maneuver Pharaoh into letting them live in the Land of Goshen, Egypt's choicest pasturing land, they did not employ any deceit to attain this end. Yosef instructed his brothers to stress that tending flocks was the only occupation they had, in the hope that this would be enough to convince Pharaoh to let them live in Goshen. Yosef in his instructions made no mention of telling Pharaoh that they came merely to sojourn in the land. The brothers followed Yosef's advice. The Torah tells us (ibid. 47:3): *And Pharaoh said to his brothers, What do you*

do? And they said to Pharaoh, Your servants are shepherds, both we and our fathers. We find that Pharaoh made no response to this remark. He understood what the brothers had in mind, and received their answer in silence. The brothers saw that they were in a predicament and tried other means to sway Pharaoh. And they said to Pharaoh, We have come to sojourn in the land (ibid. v. 4)). We come as temporary residents, not as occupiers. This was said with perfect honesty. Yosef himself only intended that his family stay in Egypt until the end of the famine, as we find him saying (ibid. 45:11): And I will provide for you there [in the Land of Goshen] for there will be five more years of famine. Thus this remark is an accurate indication of the intentions of Yaakov and his family.

בְּמַתִּי מַעֲט / With Few People

Q *With few people, as it is said ... In this particular section of the Haggadah, all that is being done is taking verses in Devarim 26, and taking other*

verses in Shemos and Bereishis to prove them. How does one "prove" one verse of the Torah with another? Are they not both equally the words of the Living God?

“Great, mighty” — as it is said, “And the Children of Israel were fruitful and fertile, and they multiplied and became very, very mighty, and the land became full of them.”¹

“And formidable” — as it is said, “Like the plants of the field I made tens of thousands of you, and you increased and grew, and became mature. Your breasts were full, and your hair had grown, but you were naked and bare. I passed over you and saw you downtrodden in your blood and I said to you: ‘Through your blood you shall live!’ And I said to you: ‘Through your blood you shall live!’”²

(1) *Shemos* 1:7. (2) *Yechezkel* 16:7,6.

them. Our Sages attribute the increase in number to multiple births, which brings us to *mighty*. The offspring of multiple births are generally smaller and weaker than most babies. Many of them die soon after birth. This was not the case

with the children of the Jews in Egypt. They were *mighty* — as strong, as big, and as viable as other children. Thus *great* corresponds to *fruitful and fertile*, while *mighty* corresponds to *and they multiplied and became very, very, mighty*.

וְרַב / And Formidable

Q *And formidable, as it is said: Like the plants of the field, I made tens of thousands of you.*

Wouldn't this verse have been more appropriate as a support for the Jews' fertility rather than their formidability?

A The emphasis here is on *like the plants of the field*, not on *I made tens of thousands of you*. The incidence of infant mortality among a slave population would be expected to be much higher than in a normal community. Even among those children who would survive in-

fancy, many would be expected to be underdeveloped physically, intellectually, and emotionally, as their parents would be too preoccupied with their labor to care for them properly. This was not the case with the Jewish people in Egypt. They were *formidable* in the sense that their children were beautifully developed in all respects despite the fact that their parents were unable to care for them properly because of their sufferings. In this sense they were *like the plants of the field*, like wild vegetation which is often more beautiful than the handiwork of the greatest artist.

גָּדוֹל עֲצוּם – בְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל פָּרוּ
וַיִּשְׂרְצוּ וַיִּרְבּוּ וַיַּעֲצְמוּ בְּמָאד מְאֹד, וַתִּמְלֵא הָאָרֶץ
אֹתָם.¹

וְרַב – בְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, רִבְכָּה בְּצֶמַח הַשָּׂדֶה נִתְתִּיף,
וַתִּרְבֵּי וַתִּגְדֹּל לִי וַתֵּבְאֵי בְּעַדִּי עֲדָיִים, שָׂדִים נִכְנּוּ וּשְׁעָרָהּ
צִמָּח, וְאֵת עֵרֶם וְעָרֶיהָ; וְאָעֵבֶר עָלֶיךָ וְאֶרְאֶה
מִתְבוֹסֶסֶת בְּדַמְיָךְ, וְאָמַר לָךְ, בְּדַמְיָךְ חַיִּי, וְאָמַר לָךְ,
בְּדַמְיָךְ חַיִּי.²

Q Why does the term *this teaches us* appear only in the context of this Scriptural interpretation and above – *This teaches us that Yaakov our father did not come down to settle permanently in Egypt, but merely to sojourn there* – and not in any others

of this series?

A The term appears only in the context of these two interpretations because they are less evident from the simple meaning of the text than the others.

גָּדוֹל עֲצוּם / Great, Mighty

Q The *Haggadah* has *great* and *mighty* corresponding to *and the Children of Israel were fruitful and fertile, and they multiplied and became very, very mighty*. How can two characteristics mentioned in the first verse correspond with four in the second? Even if we were to reduce the four characteristics of the second verse to the one of fertility [as the Sages say (*Midrash Tanchuma, Shemos 5*) that this verse teaches us that the Israelite women would give birth to six children at once], we

are still faced with a problem. Why didn't the *Haggadah* interpret *great* as referring to the Jews' fertility, and *mighty* as referring to something else altogether, as it did with the other words in this passage?

A *Great* and *mighty* refer to two distinct characteristics of the Jewish people in Egypt. *Great* refers to the fact that the Jewish people greatly increased their population in Egypt, despite the fact that as a distinctly foreign culture they did not attract outsiders to intermingle with

“**And the Egyptians made evil of us, and they tormented us, and laid hard labor upon us.**”¹

“**And the Egyptians made evil of us**” — as it is said, “Come, let us devise plans against him lest he increase. Then, if war will befall us, he will join our enemies and wage war against us and go up out of the land.”²

“**And they tormented us**” — as it is said, “And they put over him taskmasters to torment him with their burdens. And he built store-cities for Pharaoh — Pisom and Raamses.”³

“**And laid hard labor upon us**” — as it is said, “And the Egyptians made the Children of Israel work at racking labor.”⁴

(1) *Devarim* 26:6. (2) *Shemos* 1:10. (3) 1:11. (4) 1:13.

pects of the exile are in fact one and the same, for the hard labor was suffered in the construction of the store-cities. Why does the *Haggadah* treat them as two distinct topics?

And laid hard labor upon us. If the preceding question leads us to conclude that the Egyptians inflicted upon the Jews some manner of hard labor other than the construction of the store-cities, what is it about this other form of labor that leads it to be described as *hard* in contrast to construction work?

As the Egyptians considered the Jews a treacherous people who might turn against them, they thought they could weaken the Jews by

having them construct their store-cities. The *Haggadah* understands the term *they tormented us* which appears in *viduy bikurim* as referring to this particular aspect of the enslavement, for the Torah uses the identical term to describe the construction of the cities in *Shemos* (1:11): *And they put over him taskmasters to torment him with their burdens. And he built store-cities for Pharaoh.* *Hard labor* refers to a different aspect of the enslavement. The verse in *Shemos* (1:13) which uses a similar term: *And the Egyptians made the Children of Israel work at racking labor*, teaches us that not only the government, but individual Egyptians exploited the Jews for hard labor. This aspect of the enslavement is referred to as *hard* for in addition to being cruel, it was disorganized and unpredictable.

וַיַּרְעוּ אֶתְנוּ הַמִּצְרִים, וַיַּעֲנוּנוּ, וַיִּתְּנוּ עָלֵינוּ עֲבָדָה
קָשָׁה.¹

וַיַּרְעוּ אֶתְנוּ הַמִּצְרִים – בְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, הִבֵּה
נִתְחַכְמָה לוֹ, פֶּן יִרְבֶּה, וְהָיָה כִּי תִקְרָאנָה מִלְחָמָה, וְנוֹסֵף
גַּם הוּא עַל שְׂנְאֵינוּ, וְנִלְחַם בָּנוּ, וְעָלָה מִן הָאָרֶץ.²

וַיַּעֲנוּנוּ – בְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, וַיִּשְׁימוּ עָלֵינוּ שְׂרֵי מִסִּים,
לְמַעַן עֲנֹתוּ בְּסִבְלָתָם, וַיִּבֶן עָרֵי מִסְכָּנוֹת לְפָרְעָה, אֶת
פֶּתֶם וְאֶת רַעַמְסֵס.³

וַיִּתְּנוּ עָלֵינוּ עֲבָדָה קָשָׁה – בְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, וַיַּעֲבֲדוּ
מִצְרַיִם אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּכָפָר.⁴

וַיַּרְעוּ אֶתְנוּ הַמִּצְרִים / The Egyptians Made Evil of Us

Q Why did the *Haggadah* illustrate this verse with the verse (Shemos 1:10): *Come let us devise plans against him?* There is no mention of any evil done by the Egyptians to the Jews in this verse, merely that they devised plans against them. Would it not have been more appropriate to quote the verse (ibid. v. 22): *Every son that is born, you shall cast into the river?*

A The conventional translation of this phrase as meaning “and the Egyptians did evil unto us is incorrect.” That would have been better expressed by וַיַּרְעוּ לָנוּ, than by וַיַּרְעוּ אֶתְנוּ. Rather, this phrase means: “And the Egyptians considered us to be evil.” The verse cited to illustrate this is appropriate as it shows that the Egyptians considered the Jews a treacherous people. The decree against the male children has nothing to do with this point and is mentioned later in the *Haggadah* in its proper place.

וַיַּעֲנוּנוּ . . . / They Tormented Us

Q The *Haggadah* interprets *they tormented us* as referring to the building of the store-

cities and *laid hard labor upon us* as referring to the racking labor the Egyptians forced the Jews to perform. These two as-

“**And we cried out unto HASHEM the God of our fathers, and HASHEM heard our voice, and He saw our distress, and our travail, and our oppression.**”¹

“**And we cried out unto HASHEM the God of our fathers**” — as it is said, “During those many days, the king of Egypt died, and the Children of Israel sighed because of the labor and cried out, and their moaning rose up to God from the labor.”²

“**And HASHEM heard our voice**” — as it says, “And God heard their groan. And God remembered His covenant with Avraham, with Yitzchak and with Yaakov.”³

“**And He saw our distress**” — that means forced abstinence from normal family life, as it is said, “And God saw the Children of Israel, and God knew.”⁴

“**And our travail**” — that means the sons, as it is said, “Every son that is born you will cast into the river, and every daughter you will let live.”⁵

“**And our oppression**” — that means stress, as it says, “I have also seen the oppression by which the Egyptians are oppressing them.”⁶

וַיִּרְא אֶת עֲנֵינוּ וְאֶת עֲמָלֵנוּ וְאֶת לַחֲצֵנוּ / And He Saw Our Distress and Our Travail and Our Oppression

Q *And He saw our distress (עֲנֵינוּ). That means forced abstinence from normal family life.*

Earlier, the *Haggadah* interpreted a word with the same root, *and they tormented us* (וַיַּעֲבֹדוּ), as referring to hard labor, which is, in fact, the interpretation implied by the context that word is found in. Why does the *Haggadah* assert that *forced abstinence from normal family life*, a matter not mentioned

explicitly at all in the text of the Torah, is the intent of the word *distress*?

And God saw the Children of Israel and God knew. How does this support the idea that *distress* connotes *forced abstinence from normal family life*?

And our travail — that means the sons. Why doesn't the *Haggadah* interpret the verse mentioned above, *and the Egyptians did evil unto us*, as

וַנִּצְעֶק אֶל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֵינוּ, וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֶת
קִלְנוּ, וַיֵּרָא אֶת עֲנִינוּ, וְאֶת עֲמַלְנוּ, וְאֶת
לַחֲצֵנוּ.¹

וַנִּצְעֶק אֶל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֵינוּ – כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, וַיְהִי
בַיָּמִים הָרַבִּים הֵהֶם, וַיָּמָת מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם, וַיֵּאָנְחוּ בְנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן הָעֲבָדָה, וַיִּזְעְקוּ, וַתַּעַל שְׁוַעְתָּם אֶל הָאֱלֹהִים
מִן הָעֲבָדָה.²

וַיִּשְׁמַע יְהוָה אֶת קִלְנוּ – כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, וַיִּשְׁמַע
אֱלֹהִים אֶת נַאֲקָתָם, וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת בְּרִיתוֹ אֶת
אֲבָרָהָם, אֶת יִצְחָק, וְאֶת יַעֲקֹב.³

וַיֵּרָא אֶת עֲנִינוּ – זו פְּרִישׁוֹת דֶּרֶךְ אֶרֶץ, כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר,
וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וַיֵּדַע אֱלֹהִים.⁴

וְאֶת עֲמַלְנוּ – אֵלּוּ הַבָּנִים, כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, כָּל הַבֶּן הַיְלֹד
הַיָּאֲרָה תִּשְׁלִיכֶהוּ, וְכָל הַבַּת תַּחֲוִין.⁵

וְאֶת לַחֲצֵנוּ – זוֹ הַדִּחָק, כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, וְגַם רָאִיתִי אֶת
הַלֶּחֶץ אֲשֶׁר מִצְרַיִם לֹחֲצִים אֹתָם.⁶

(1) Devarim 26:7. (2) Shemos 2:23. (3) 2:24. (4) 2:25. (5) 1:22. (6) 3:9.

His Covenant / אֶת בְּרִיתוֹ אֶת אֲבָרָהָם אֶת יִצְחָק וְאֶת יַעֲקֹב with Avraham, with Yitzchak and with Yaakov

Q The covenant that Hashem made with Avraham is well known to us, but what covenant did He make with Yitzchak and Yaakov?

A Though Hashem made His covenant with Avraham, the covenant protected Yitzchak and Yaakov

against their enemies as well and is thus ascribed to all three of them. Furthermore, according to one interpretation, the three types of cattle involved in the covenant, the calf, the goat, and the ram, (see Bereishis 15:9) are symbolic of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov respectively; so from this perspective Yitzchak and Yaakov were also involved in the covenant.

“**A**nd HASHEM took us out of Egypt with a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terror, and with signs, and with wonders.”¹

(1) Devarim 26:8.

wife and she conceived. In our context it means that Hashem gave the Jewish people in Egypt the desire to procreate despite the bleak prospects of their descendants. Thus the subjects of the verse in *viduy bikurim* and this verse are identical. Furthermore, the use of the phrases *and He saw* or *and God saw* in both places indicates commonality of subject matter.

In the same vein, *and our travail* is interpreted as referring to the decree against the sons. This, too, was a private tribulation. As Ramban says in his commentary on the Torah, Pharaoh felt it was beneath his dignity to make a public decree of this, so he instructed the midwives to carry it out covertly. *Travail* (טַרְוִיל) is a term which connotes this particular decree far more clearly than the more ambiguous *and the Egyptians made evil of us*, for it alludes to both the travail of bearing and raising children and the hardship of having to conceal them from the Egyptians.

It is this last point that is alluded to by the supporting verse *every son that is born you will cast into the river* with its intimations of the desperate attempts of parents to save their children.

The term לַחַץ [which we have translated as *oppression*] can refer to either physical brutality or mental cruelty. The *Haggadah* thus makes a point by interpreting it as *stress* (קִדְחָה), the psychological strain of the incessant pressure of labor, rather than its physical difficulty. This, too, was suffering of a private nature.

Alternatively, we might say that the common feature of *distress*, *travail*, and *oppression*, which the *Haggadah* interprets as *forced abstinence from normal family life*, *the sons*, and *stress* is not so much the private nature of the suffering they connote, as the fact that they were forms of mental and emotional anguish as opposed to the physical rigor referred to in the preceding verse.

וְיֹצֵאתָנוּ ה' מִמִּצְרַיִם / Hashem Took Us out of Egypt

Q And Hashem took us out of Egypt – not through an angel, nor through a seraph, nor through a messenger. Isn't this directly contradicted by the verse (*Bamidbar 20:16*): *And He sent a*

messenger and he [the messenger] took us out of Egypt?

A No. Hashem can use angels or messengers in two distinct ways. He can entrust them with a task and leave

וַיֹּצֵאֲנוּ יְהוָה מִמִּצְרַיִם בְּיַד חֲזָקָה, וּבְזֶרַע נְטוּיָה, וּבְמָרָא גָדֹל, וּבְאִתּוֹת וּבְמִפְתִּים.¹

referring to casting the children into the river? Surely this was the greatest evil the Egyptians inflicted upon the Jews.

As it is said: Every son that is born you will cast into the river, and every daughter you will let live. How does this verse support the idea that the word *travail* refers to casting the sons into the river? *Travail* (עָמַל) is practically synonymous with *distress* (עָנִי). Why does the *Haggadah* give them such different interpretations?

And our oppression – that means stress. As *oppression* (לִחְץ) and *stress* (רֶחֶק) are nearly synonymous, what new point of information is the *Haggadah* teaching us through this interpretation?

A The verses of *viduy bikurim* that we are dealing with read as follows: *And the Egyptians made evil of us, and they tormented us, and laid hard labor upon us. And we cried out unto Hashem, the God of our fathers, and Hashem heard our voice, and He saw our distress, and our travail, and our oppression.* If our *distress*, our *travail*, and our *oppression* of the second verse referred to the same matters as *made evil of us, tormented us, and laid hard labor upon us* of the first verse, the second verse would be

lengthy and repetitious. It could have been written: 'And Hashem heard our voice, and He saw what was being done to us in Egypt.' Since the Torah does mention *distress, travail, and oppression* in this verse specifically, the *Haggadah* understands that they are matters that have not been dealt with in the preceding verse.

What then are they? They are things that Hashem, only Hashem, *saw*. Whereas the first verse refers to the hard labor which the Egyptians inflicted upon the Jews publicly, the second verse alludes to their private tribulations.

The first of these was *forced abstinence from normal family life*. The Jews, in their misery and despair, refrained from normal marital relations. Why bring another generation into wretchedness? *Distress* (עָנִי) is the most apt term to use for this as the Torah uses it elsewhere with the same intent. When Lavan wanted to ensure that Yaakov would maintain normal marital relations with his daughters, he said (*Bereishis* 31:50): *Do not cause distress to (תַּעֲזֶה) my daughters.*

And God saw the Children of Israel and God knew is an appropriate supporting text for this idea. First let us determine the meaning of the verse itself. The verb "to know" has the connotation of marital relations, as in the verse (*ibid.* 4:1): *And Adam knew Chava his*

“And HASHEM took us out of Egypt” — not through an angel, nor through a seraph, nor through a messenger. Rather the Holy One, Blessed is He, Himself, in His glory, as it is said, **“And I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and I will kill every firstborn in the Land of Egypt from man to beast, and upon all the gods of Egypt I will inflict judgments. I am HASHEM.”**¹

“And I will pass through the land of Egypt this night” — I, and not an angel. **“And I will kill every firstborn in the land of Egypt”** — I, and not a seraph. **“And upon all the gods of Egypt I will inflict judgments”** — I and not any messenger. **“I am HASHEM”** — I am He, and none other.

(1) *Shemos* 12:2.

sach. The Jews were apprehensive about carrying out this command. It meant publicly slaughtering and eating the deity of the nation which had held them in slavery for centuries. Thus Moshe Rabbenu reassures them that *He will not allow the destroyer*, that is, the outraged Egyptians, *to come into your houses to smite you*. According to this interpretation the verse in no way contradicts the idea that Hashem carried out the killing of the firstborn directly.

Q *As it is said: And I will pass through the land of Egypt this night and I will kill every firstborn in the land of Egypt*. How can this verse be cited as proof that Hashem brought about the Exodus directly when its subject is not the Exodus but rather the killing of the firstborn?

And I will kill every firstborn in

the land of Egypt — I and not a seraph. And upon all the gods of Egypt I will inflict judgments — I and not any messenger. How can the *Haggadah* consider “passing through” an activity apart from “killing” and “inflicting judgments”? Isn’t “passing through the Land of Egypt” the broader delineation of the procedure which encompassed both “killing the firstborn” and “inflicting judgments” on the gods?

A The verse (*ibid.* v. 12): *And I will pass through the Land of Egypt this night and I will kill every firstborn in the land of Egypt from man to beast, and upon all the gods of Egypt I will inflict judgments. I am Hashem*, refers to three separate aspects of the Exodus — one of them being the killing of the firstborn. Thus, showing that Hashem killed the firstborn directly does

וַיּוֹצֵאֲנוּ יְהוָה מִמִּצְרַיִם – לֹא עַל יְדֵי מַלְאָךְ, וְלֹא עַל
יְדֵי שָׂרָף, וְלֹא עַל יְדֵי שְׁלִיחַ, אֲלֵא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא
בְּכַבּוּדוֹ וּבְעֶצְמוֹ. שְׁנֵאמַר, וַעֲבַרְתִּי בָאָרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
בְּלִילָה הַזֶּה, וְהִכִּיתִי כָל בְּכוֹר בָּאָרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מֵאָדָם וְעַד
בְּהֵמָה, וּבְכָל אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרַיִם אֶעֱשֶׂה שְׁפָטִים, אֲנִי יְהוָה.
וַעֲבַרְתִּי בָאָרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בְּלִילָה הַזֶּה – אֲנִי וְלֹא
מַלְאָךְ. וְהִכִּיתִי כָל בְּכוֹר בָּאָרֶץ מִצְרַיִם – אֲנִי וְלֹא
שָׂרָף. וּבְכָל אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרַיִם אֶעֱשֶׂה שְׁפָטִים – אֲנִי וְלֹא
הַשְּׁלִיחַ. אֲנִי יְהוָה – אֲנִי הוּא, וְלֹא אֲחֵר.

them to their own devices to carry it out, or He can carry out the task Himself and use the angel or messenger as no more than a tool in the process. We can compare this to a man who kills somebody with a sword. Surely we would attribute the killing to the man rather than to the sword.

When the *Haggadah* says that Hashem took the Jewish people out of Egypt Himself and not through an angel, it means that Hashem carried out this task directly without entrusting it to any intermediary. The angel referred to in the verse in *Bamidbar*, however, is Moshe Rabbeinu whose role in the Exodus was simply that of being Hashem's instrument.

Alternatively, we can say that the second "he" in the verse, *And He sent a messenger and He took us out of Egypt*, refers not to the messenger but to Hashem. Accordingly, the verse is saying that Hashem *sent a messenger*, that is Moshe Rabbeinu who was sent to warn Pharaoh, and then He, that

is Hashem, *took us out of Egypt*.

Q *And I will kill every firstborn – I, and not a seraph. Isn't this explicitly contradicted by the verse (Shemos 12:23): And He will not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to smite you?*

A Along the lines of the preceding answer, we should not interpret *the destroyer* in this verse as a being with some sort of decision-making role in the killing of the firstborn but rather as the implement Hashem used to kill the firstborn – whatever it may have been – analogous to a man's weapon.

Alternatively, *the destroyer* in this verse might have nothing to do with Hashem's implement in the killing of the firstborn. The verse appears in the context of Hashem's command to the Jewish people to sacrifice the *Korban Pe-*

“With a strong hand” – that means the pestilence, as it is said, “Behold, the hand of HASHEM is against your livestock in the fields, against the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the cattle, and the flocks, a very heavy pestilence.”¹

“And with an outstretched arm” – that means the sword, as it is said, “And his sword is drawn in his hand, outstretched over Jerusalem.”²

(1) Shemos 9:3. (2) Divrei HaYamim I 21:16.

As we mentioned above, the Exodus from Egypt required the neutralization of powerful cosmic forces which would have protected the Egyptians. This could be accomplished only by Hashem’s direct

intervention, as these forces were more powerful than any angel. The armies of Ashur, however, had no comparable forces operating on their behalf and could therefore be dealt with by an angel.

עִזְרָה בְּיָד חֲזָקָה – / With a Strong Hand – That Means the Pestilence

Q Surely the context of this phrase, *and Hashem took us out of Egypt with a strong hand*, indicates

that it refers to the killing of the firstborn. In fact, we find another verse which refers to the killing of the firstborn as being performed by a *strong hand*, as it says (Shemos 3:19-20): *And I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go if not by a strong hand. And I will stretch out My hand and smite Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in their midst.* Why, then, does the Haggadah interpret it here as referring to the pestilence?

And with an outstretched arm – that means the sword. How can the Haggadah mention the

sword as one of the causes of the Exodus when it was not one of the plagues the Egyptians suffered?

A Just as the hand is weaker than the arm, so too, when *strong hand* is juxtaposed in the same verse with *outstretched arm*, it connotes something weaker than the outstretched arm. The sword, which the Haggadah says is the meaning of the *outstretched arm*, is a term for the killing of the firstborn. Thus, here the *strong hand* must mean something less serious than the killing of the firstborn, such as the *pestilence*, whatever it might mean in other contexts where it appears alone. We will elaborate on this further when we discuss “the signs” (page 78).

בְּיַד חֹזֶקָה – זֶה הַדָּבָר, כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, הִנֵּה יַד יְהוָה
הוֹיָה בְּמִקְנֶךָ אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׂדֶה, בְּסוֹסִים בַּחֲמֹרִים בַּגְּמָלִים
בַּבָּקָר וּבַצֹּאן, יָדָבֵר כְּבִד מְאֹד.¹

וּבְזֶרַע נְטוּיָה – זֶה הַחֶרֶב, כְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, וַיַּחֲרֹבוּ
שְׁלוֹפָה בָּדָדוֹ, נְטוּיָה עַל יְרוּשָׁלַיִם.²

show that He brought about at least one aspect of the Exodus directly. As we will see, “passing through” is not the same as “killing” and “inflicting judgments.”

The phenomenon of the Exodus itself [as opposed to the Ten Plagues and other miracles that accompanied it] was miraculous for three reasons. First of all, the foul atmosphere of Egypt, polluted as it was by rampant idolatry, would normally be a place too impure for Hashem to manifest Himself directly. Secondly, the unyielding resolve of Pharaoh and his people to keep the Jews in servitude would never have allowed them to leave in the normal course of events. Finally, the supernatural forces which the Egyptians manipulated to their advantage through their pagan cult should have protected them from any mishap.

It is these three aspects of the miracle of the Exodus that are alluded to in the verse under discussion. *And I will pass through the land of Egypt this night – I, and not an angel* indicates that despite the impurity of Egypt, Hashem intervened directly on behalf of His people. *And*

I will kill every firstborn in the land of Egypt – I, and not a seraph refers to the second aspect of the miracle. Through the killing of the firstborn Hashem will bend the obdurate will of the Egyptians to the point where they will beg the Jews to leave. The contrast here is to a seraph, a fiery angel, a term that connotes the fever of disease which causes natural death, as opposed to the miraculous death of the healthy firstborn Egyptians. *And upon all the gods of Egypt I will inflict judgments* refers to the third aspect of the miracle, Hashem’s neutralization of the supernatural forces which the Egyptians had harnessed. *I am Hashem – I am He and none other*. As mighty as the various forces of the cosmos may be, there is always One more powerful.

Q Why did Hashem carry out the smiting of the firstborn Himself, while He smote the camp of the king of Ashur through an angel, as it says (*Melachim II 19:35*): *And the angel of Hashem went out and smote the camp of Ashur?*

“And with great terror” – that means the revelation of the *Shechinah*, as it is said, “Or has God ever tried to come to take unto Himself a nation [other than you] from the midst of another nation, with trials, with signs and with wonders, and with battle, and with a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terrors, like all that HASHEM your God has done for you in Egypt before your eyes?”¹

“And with signs” – that means the staff, as it says, “Take in your hand this staff with which you will perform the signs.”²

“And with wonders” – that means the blood, as it says, “And I will display wonders in the heavens and on the earth:

(1) Devarim 4:34. (2) Shemos 4:17.

were formidable spiritual forces, as we mentioned above regarding the smiting of the first-born (p. 75), their miraculous punishment was a clear revelation of the immanent presence of Hashem. Furthermore, the killing of the firstborn itself was carried out in a manner that made it clear that it was being

done by Hashem directly. Thus *the revelation of the Shechinah* was brought about through one of the plagues and the supporting verse is therefore appropriate. The use of the plural in this verse indicates that each and every death of a firstborn was in itself an individual revelation of the *Shechinah*.

וְהַמֹּטֶה – וּבְאִתּוֹת / And with Signs – That Means the Staff

Q *And with signs – that means the staff.* How can *signs* refer to the staff when the staff was merely the vehicle for bringing about the signs, not a sign in itself, as is clear from the supporting verse?

And with wonders – that means the blood. How can the plural word *wonders* refer to the single

miracle of the blood? In fact, in the supporting verse it refers not only to blood, but to *fire* and *pillars of smoke* as well.

As it says: *And I will display wonders in the heavens and on the earth; blood and fire and pillars of smoke.* This verse seems to indicate that in addition to blood, the Egyptians were smitten with fire and pillars of smoke. Why

וּבְמֶרָא גָדֵל – זו גְּלוּי שְׂכִינָה, בְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, או
הַנִּסָּה אֱלֹהִים לָבוֹא לַקַּחַת לוֹ גּוֹי מִקֶּרֶב גּוֹי, בְּמִסַּת,
בְּאִתּוֹת, וּבְמוֹפְתִים, וּבְמִלְחָמָה, וּבִיד חֲזָקָה, וּבִזְרוּעַ
נְטוּיָה, וּבְמוֹרָאִים גְּדֹלִים, כָּכָל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לָכֶם יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בְּמִצְרַיִם לְעֵינֶיךָ.¹

וּבְאִתּוֹת – זֶה הַמָּטָה, בְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, וְאֵת הַמָּטָה
הַזֶּה תִּקַּח בְּיָדְךָ, אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה בּוֹ אֵת הָאִתּוֹת.²
וּבְמִפְתִּים – זֶה הַדָּם, בְּמָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, וְנָתַתִּי מוֹפְתִים
בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ –

And with Great Terror – / וּבְמֶרָא גָדֵל – זו גְּלוּי שְׂכִינָה § That Means the Revelation of the Shechinah

Q Why does the *Haggadah* assert that *great terror* is an allusion to the *revelation of the Shechinah*? When the identical term appears elsewhere in the Torah (*Devarim* 34:12): *And all the great terror which Moshe performed in the sight of all Israel*, the major commentators agree that it does not refer to this. [*Rashi* says it refers to the miracles that took place in the desert, while *Ramban* says it refers to the assembly at Mount Sinai.] Furthermore, the *Shechinah* did not descend among the Jews until after the Exodus, at Mount Sinai.

As it is said: Or has Hashem ever tried to come to take unto Himself a nation [other than you] from the midst of another nation, with trials, with signs, and with wonders, and with battle, and

with a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terrors? How can the *Haggadah* use this verse to support the interpretation of *great terror* as meaning the *revelation of the Shechinah*? Isn't it clear from the context of the verse that *great terrors* refers to the plagues inflicted upon Egypt? Furthermore, would the *Haggadah* go so far as to say that *great terrors* in the plural, as it appears in the supporting verse, indicates multiple revelations of the *Shechinah*?

A While the *Shechinah* did not reveal itself in Egypt with the same intensity as it did at Mount Sinai, there was, indeed, a revelation in Egypt as well. At the time of the killing of the firstborn, Hashem also inflicted judgments on the gods of the Egyptians. Since these gods

As each of the words דָּם , blood, אֵשׁ , fire, and עָשָׁן , smoke, is said, a bit of wine is removed from the cup, with the finger or by pouring.

Blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.”¹

An alternative explanation is: “With a strong hand” means two plagues. “And with an outstretched arm” — two more plagues. “And with great terror” — two more. “And with signs” — two more. “And with wonders” — two more.

(1) Yoel 3:3.

דְּבַר אֶחָד / An Alternative Explanation

Q An alternative explanation is: “With a strong hand” means two plagues. “And with an outstretched arm” — two more plagues. “And with great terror” — two more. “And with signs” — two more. “And with wonders” — two more. It is clear that *with signs* and *with wonders* can be interpreted as referring to two plagues as they are plural words, but how can the *Haggadah* interpret the singular *strong hand*, *outstretched arm*, and *great terror* as including two?

A In the alternative explanation, the *Haggadah* is assuming that the verse under discussion is referring only to the plagues. As there were ten plagues and the verse mentions them in five phrases, it stands to reason that each phrase denotes two plagues. Since *strong hand*, *outstretched arm*, and *great terror* are all two-word phrases, they can denote two plagues.

Q Why not mention the transformation of Moshe’s staff into a snake and his hand being smitten with *tzaraas* among the wonders performed in Egypt?

A The subject of discussion here is the plagues by which Hashem brought the Jewish people out of Egypt. While the transformation of the staff and Moshe Rabbenu’s hand being smitten with *tzaraas* were indeed miracles, they were not plagues inflicted upon the Egyptians.

Q Why did Hashem appear to Moshe in the burning bush?

A The burning bush was intended to allay any fear Moshe may have had about confronting and chastising Pharaoh. The lowly bush was meant to symbolize Moshe. Just as the bush was not consumed by the

As each of the words דם, blood, אש, fire, and עשן, smoke, is said, a bit of wine is removed from the cup, with the finger or by pouring.

דם ואש ותמרות עשן.¹

דָּבָר אַחֵר – בִּיד חֹזְקָה, שְׁתִּים. וּבִזְרֹעַ נְטוּיָה,
שְׁתִּים. וּבִמְרָא גָדֵל, שְׁתִּים. וּבְאִתּוֹת,
שְׁתִּים. וּבְמִפְתִּים, שְׁתִּים.

doesn't the *Haggadah* say this directly?

Why, of all the Ten Plagues, are only pestilence and blood mentioned in this series of interpretations? Would it not have been more appropriate to have said that *with signs and with wonders* alluded to all of the plagues rather than to the staff and the blood?

A When the *Haggadah* says that *signs* means the staff, it does not mean the staff itself but rather the five plagues which Moshe Rabbeinu brought on through motioning with his staff – blood, crocodiles,* lice, hail, and locusts. These five plagues are referred to as *signs*.** Up to this point, we have mentioned seven plagues in this section of the *Haggadah*: the five signs, the pestilence, and the killing of the firstborn. The remaining three are referred to here as *blood*.

Blood connotes the plague of (*arov*) wild animals, as the beasts would kill their Egyptian victims in a bloody manner. It also connotes boils as they were a result of a disease of the blood. Finally, it connotes darkness because of the crimson tinge of the sun during that plague.

In the phrase *blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke*, the supporting verse states in more explicit fashion the three plagues referred to by the *Haggadah* as blood. *Blood* in this verse, too, does not refer to the plague of transforming the waters of the Nile to blood, for this verse refers to *wonders in the heavens and on the earth* – not in the water. Thus, in this verse *blood* means the plague of wild animals. *Fire* refers to the inflammation of the boils. *Pillars of smoke* refers to the haze of darkness. Accordingly, through this interpretation of *staff* and *blood*, all of the Ten Plagues have been mentioned in this section of the *Haggadah*.

[* Although the common translation of צִרְדֵּי is "frogs," some commentaries, notably Abarbanel and Sforno, render "crocodiles."]

[**Abarbanel does not explain why these particular plagues are referred to as signs. Perhaps it is due to some symbolic aspect of the movement of the staff.]

These are the ten plagues which the Holy One, Blessed is He, brought upon the Egyptians in Egypt:

servitude was not an inherent trait but rather the result of their being in Egypt. And just as Moshe's hand was instantly cured the second he pulled it out, so too the Jews would lose all traces of their servility as they left Egypt.

The last sign, the transformation of the water of the Nile to blood, would allay the Jews' fear of the Egyptian people by indicating to them that Hashem would make the Egyptians' blood flow like water.

Others view the three signs as an ascending hierarchy of miracles. The lowest form of miracle occurs when a phenomenon that naturally comes about through a process composed of many stages takes place without going through all of the normal stages. The first sign is an example of this. A staff can be transformed into a snake. It can decompose and become dust. A snake, whose food is dust (*Bereishis* 3:14), can eat this dust and thus make the staff a part of itself. The miracle in the case of the staff of Moshe Rabbenu was that the transformation took place

instantly without going through the normal steps.

The second level of miracle is the co-existence of things that exist in nature separately but not together. For instance, there exist in nature both half a chicken and half a frog, but not a single creature which is half chicken and half frog. The second sign was of this variety. There exist in nature men who are healthy and men who are afflicted with *tzaraas*. There are no men who are healthy in part of their body and at the same time afflicted with *tzaraas* in another part of their body. While it is true that the symptoms of *tzaraas* might be visible in only part of the body, the disease nonetheless affects the sufferer's entire being. This was not so in the case of Moshe Rabbenu. The *tzaraas* was confined to his hand while the rest of him was perfectly well.

The highest level of miracle is the occurrence of a phenomenon which does not appear in nature, even partially. This is exemplified by the third sign, the transformation of water to blood.

אלו עשר מכות / The Ten Plagues

Q Why did Hashem choose to inflict plagues upon the Egyptians and why these particular plagues?

A The Sages explain that Hashem brought these particular plagues upon the Egyptians for the following reasons. The Egyptians were chastened with the plague of blood

אֱלֹהֵי עֶשֶׂר מַכּוֹת שֶׁהֵבִיא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עַל הַמִּצְרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם, וְאֱלֹהֵינוּ:

fire, so Moshe would not be consumed by the fire of Pharaoh's wrath. Upon seeing our master Moshe's astonishment at this sight, Hashem commanded him to take off his shoes, as if to say that from this point on Moshe need no longer rely upon any earthly means of protection.

Q What was the meaning of the three miraculous signs that Hashem gave Moshe to show the Jewish people?

A The three miraculous signs were meant to counter the three reasons why the Jews would be expected to doubt the prospect of their future redemption. First of all, they would expect Pharaoh in his wickedness to turn a deaf ear to whatever Moshe and Aharon would have to tell him. Second, having been subject to exile and servitude for such a long time, the Jews would be expected to despair of any hope for salvation. Finally, the Egyptians, being a stronger nation than the Jews, could hardly be expected to give up a valuable source of slave labor.

The sign of the transformation of Moshe Rabbenu's staff into a snake was meant to dispel any worry the Jews may have had about Pharaoh. Ibn Ezra points out in his commentary on the

verse (ibid. 1:8) *And there arose a new king over Egypt* that Pharaoh was not descended from the rulers of Egypt who preceded him. Thus the staff can be seen as a symbol of Pharaoh before he rose to power. Just as the staff is a piece of dead wood, not part of a fruit-bearing tree, so Pharaoh was not the descendant of a royal dynasty, but a mere individual without connection to any noble "fruit." But despite his humble background, Pharaoh seized power and became a mighty ruler. This is represented by the staff transforming into a snake, for the prophet (*Isaiah* 27:1) refers to Pharaoh as *a snake like a bar*. When Moshe first performed this sign he fled from the snake (*Shemos* 4:3) as he was to flee from Pharaoh to Midian. But then the snake changed back to a staff when Moshe grabbed it by the tail, just as Pharaoh was to be demeaned at the hand of Moshe.

The sign of Moshe's hand being smitten with *tzaraas* was meant to stop the Jews from thinking that they were inherently a nation of slaves and to get them to view their redemption as imminent. Just as Moshe's hand was inherently healthy and only became diseased as a result of being placed inside his cloak, so the Jewish people were meant to understand that they were essentially a respectable nation by the standards of both God and man, and their

As each of the plagues is mentioned, a bit of wine is removed from the cup.
The same is done at each word of Rabbi Yehudah's mnemonic.

1. Blood 2. Crocodiles 3. Lice 4. Wild Animals 5. Pestilence
 6. Boils 7. Hail 8. Locusts 9. Darkness
 10. Killing of the Firstborn.
-

brought two plagues involving animals, which exist on the earth's surface — wild beasts and pestilence.

Boils came through the element of air, as it says (*Shemos* 9:10), *and Moshe threw it heavenward and it became an infestation of boils*. Hail came through the element of fire, as it says (*ibid.* v. 23): *And Hashem sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down upon the ground*. Locusts are creatures which fly through the element of air. Darkness was brought about through a thickening of the air which did not allow the sun's light to penetrate. Finally, the killing of the firstborn came about through a miraculous airborne fire which suddenly entered their bodies.

Alternatively, we can view the Ten Plagues as just retribution for the evils inflicted by the Egyptians upon the Jews. The Egyptians bloodied the waters of the Nile by killing Jewish children in it. Thus its waters were literally turned into blood. Because Jewish women cried in anguish as they saw their children cast into the river, Hashem brought forth from the river the crocodiles with their cries. The Egyptians embittered the lives of the Jews by forcing them to perform hard labor with mortar and bricks which come

from the ground. Therefore Moshe hit the ground with his staff to bring on the plague of lice, as if to curse the ground which had brought his people such suffering. Not only were the Jews subject to Pharaoh, but any Egyptian, from the highest to the humblest, could bid them to do their labor. Because of this, they were punished by a mixture of wild beasts of all sizes who would snatch them from their houses as they did to the Jews. The Jews could not tend their cattle properly because of all the work they had to do for the Egyptians. In addition, the Egyptians used to steal the cattle of the Jews. Because of this, Hashem smote the Egyptians' cattle with pestilence. Because the Egyptians separated Jewish men from their wives, they were smitten with boils which prevented marital relations. Because the Egyptians would throw stones and shout curses at the Jews, Hashem punished them with hailstones and thunderclaps. Because the Egyptians would steal the crops of the Jews, Hashem sent locusts to consume their crops. Because the Jews suffered in the darkness of exile, Hashem smote the Egyptians with darkness. Finally, just as the Egyptians used to kill the children of Hashem, so did He slay their firstborn children.

As each of the plagues is mentioned, a bit of wine is removed from the cup.
The same is done at each word of Rabbi Yehudah's mnemonic.

דָּם. צַפְרָדִּיעַ. כְּנִים. עָרוֹב. דֶּבֶר. שָׁחִין. בָּרָד. אֲרָבָה. חֹשֶׁךְ. מַכַּת בְּכוֹרוֹת.

because they prevented Jewish women from purifying themselves from their blood of *niddah*. The intolerable barking of the crocodiles was punishment for making Jewish women suppress their cries of pain when they gave birth in hiding. The Egyptians' land swarmed with lice preventing them from doing their work, because they stole land from the Jews. While the Jewish men were busy tending the cattle of the Egyptians, Jewish women would have to nurse the Egyptians' children. The wild animals were the very animals the Jews tended which were sent to snatch these children and devour them. Because the Egyptians would hitch Jews to their plows to save the strength of their cattle, Hashem smote their cattle with pestilence. The Egyptians were smitten with boils so that they would not come to their bathhouses and the Jews would be free to use them. [They were pelted with hailstones because they used to stone the Jews. The hail also gave the Jews a respite from their work in the Egyptians' gardens and orchards. Because the Egyptians would use the Jews to plant for them, the locusts were sent to eat all that the Jews had sown.*]

Darkness allowed the Jews to bury the sinners among them who died during that plague. The burials could take place without the humiliation of the Egyptians' watching. Hashem concluded the plagues with the killing of the firstborn to fulfill His threat in His initial warning to Pharaoh (*Shemos* 4:22-23): *So says Hashem, Israel is My firstborn son. And I say to you, send My son so that he may serve Me. And if you refuse to send him, behold I will kill your firstborn son.*

I prefer to explain the plagues as Hashem's means of demonstrating His mastery over all four of the elements — earth, water, air and fire. First Hashem smote the water by turning it into blood. This had the primary effect of making the Egyptians suffer from thirst and the secondary effect of killing those creatures of the deep which they used for food. But not only did beneficial aquatic life die off. Some harmful creatures — the crocodiles — increased in number miraculously and emerged from the water to annoy the Egyptians.

After smiting the element of water through these two plagues, Hashem smote the Egyptians' land in the next three. First, the land itself turned to lice. Then He

[*The text of the Abarbanel before me does not include the Sages' explanations of the plagues of hail and locusts. I have drawn these from *Yalkut Shimoni*, *Shemos* 182, where the rest of the explanations in this paragraph also appear.]

Rabbi Yehudah abbreviated them thus:

D'tzach, Adash, B'achav.

The cups are refilled. The wine that was removed is not used.

Rabbi Yosi the Galilean says: "What is the source for the idea that the Egyptians suffered ten plagues in Egypt and suffered fifty plagues on the sea? What does it say concerning Egypt? 'And the sorcerers said to Pharaoh: It is the finger of God.'¹ And what does it say concerning the sea? 'And Yisrael saw the great hand which Hashem manifested against Egypt, and the people feared Hashem, and they believed

(1) *Shemos* 8:15.

He did not involve Himself in the lowly, material world. There were yet others who believed that Hashem did intervene in this world but that His power was limited.

We find Moshe Rabbeinu addressing himself to these three beliefs when he introduces himself to Pharaoh. His first statement to Pharaoh reads (*Shemos* 5:1): *So says Hashem the God of Israel, send My people and they will celebrate unto Me in the desert.* The name *Hashem* connotes that God is the prime cause of all existence. The term *God of Israel* implies His direct involvement in the material world. The command, "*Send my people,*" indicates that His dominion is not limited to Israel alone but extends to the entire world.

Pharaoh in his response to Moshe (*Shemos* 5:2) repeats the three aforementioned heretical doctrines. *Who is Hashem?* reflects denial of the existence of the primary cause. *That I should listen to His voice* implies His lack of a voice or involvement in the

material world. *I do not know Hashem nor will I send Israel* implies a limitation of Hashem's power. It is as if Pharaoh is saying, "Even if we are to accept that Hashem interacts with the material world, He is no more than the God of Israel and thus has no authority over me."

Each group of *d'tzach adash b'achav* is meant to refute one of these heretical doctrines. Before bringing on the plague of blood, Moshe said to Pharaoh (*ibid.* 7:17): *Through this you will know that I am Hashem.* The name *Hashem* connotes God as the source of all existence. This is the introduction to the first three plagues which all were meant to attest to this fundamental idea. For this reason Rabbi Yehudah classified them together as *d'tzach*.

The second group of plagues was prefaced by Moshe telling Pharaoh (*ibid.* 8:18): *So that you will know that I am Hashem in the midst of the earth.* *Adash* attests to Hashem's involvement with man's life on earth.

רַבִּי יְהוּדָה הָיָה נוֹתֵן בָּהֶם סְמָנִים: דְּצַ"ךְ • עַד"ש • בְּאֲח"ב.

The cups are refilled. The wine that was removed is not used.

רַבִּי יוֹסִי הַגָּלִילִי אוֹמֵר: מִנֵּין אַתָּה אוֹמֵר שְׁלֶקוּ
הַמִּצְרִים בְּמִצְרִים עֶשֶׂר מִכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם
לָקוּ חֲמִשִּׁים מִכּוֹת? בְּמִצְרִים מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר, וַיֹּאמְרוּ
הַחֲרֻטָּמִם אֶל פֶּרְעֵה, אֶצְבַּע אֱלֹהִים הוּא. וְעַל הַיָּם
מָה הוּא אוֹמֵר, וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַיָּד הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר
עָשָׂה יְהוָה בְּמִצְרַיִם, וַיִּירָאוּ הָעָם אֶת יְהוָה, וַיֹּאמְרֵינוּ

רַבִּי יְהוּדָה הָיָה נוֹתֵן בָּהֶם סְמָנִים: דְּצַ"ךְ עַד"ש בְּאֲח"ב /
Rabbi Yehudah abbreviated them thus:
D'tzach, Adash, B'achav.

Q What was Rabbi Yehudah's point in abbreviating the plagues?

A There are those who say that since King David enumerated the plagues in the Book of *Tehillim* (Chapter 105) in an order different from that of the Torah, Rabbi Yehudah wanted to ensure that they were mentioned at the *Seder* in the Torah's order. Others say that each abbreviation of *d'tzach*, *adash*, *b'achav* is a complete series composed of two plagues which were preceded by a warning to Pharaoh followed by one that was not. The tenth plague, the killing of the firstborn, was preceded by a warning, but since it was not part of a series it was affixed to the last abbreviation. Still others are of the opinion that *d'tzach* stands for

those plagues that were brought on by Aharon, *adash* stands for those plagues that were brought on by the Holy One, Blessed is He, without Moshe or Aharon, and *b'achav* stands for those plagues which were brought on by Moshe. I take issue with this last opinion because we find that boils, which is part of the second group, was brought on by Moshe's casting soot towards the heavens, and that the killing of the firstborn, which is part of the last group, was brought on by Hashem directly.

The following explanation seems the most satisfying to me. As we have mentioned above (page 54) Egypt was a hotbed of heretical and agnostic doctrines. There were those among the Egyptians who believed that there was no primary cause of existence. There were others who believed that there was a primary cause of existence but

in Hashem and in Moshe, His servant.¹ How much were they scourged by one finger? Ten plagues. Thus you can conclude that in Egypt they suffered ten plagues, and on the sea they suffered fifty plagues.”

Rabbi Eliezer says: “What is the source for the idea that each plague which the Holy One, Blessed is He, brought upon the Egyptians in Egypt consisted of four plagues? As it is said, ‘He did send upon them the kindling of His wrath, rage, and misery, and trouble, a legation of angels of calamity.’² ‘Rage’ – one; ‘and misery’ – two; ‘and trouble’ – three; ‘a legation of angels of calamity’ – four. Thus you can conclude that they suffered forty plagues in Egypt and two-hundred plagues on the sea.”

(1) *Shemos* 14:31. (2) *Tehillim* 78:49.

(5:5) which says: “Ten miracles were performed for our ancestors in Egypt and ten at the sea”?*

AThe Mishnah in *Avos* does not refer to the plagues suffered by the Egyptians but rather to the miracles performed *for our ancestors*; that is, miracles which directly facilitated the salvation of the Jews, rather than those which concerned the punishment of the Egyptians. In Egypt, considering the proximity in which the Jewish and Egyptian peoples lived, the very fact that the Jews did not suffer the ten plagues is considered ten miracles. As for the miracles at the sea, *Rambam* lists them as follows:

- 1) The waters split.
- 2) They formed an arch over the Jews.
- 3) The seabed under the Jews’ feet was dry and hard.
- 4) It turned to sticky clay under the feet of the Egyptians.
- 5) The sea divided into individual paths for each tribe.
- 6) The waters hardened like stone and the Egyptians’ heads were smashed against it.
- 7) It did not solidify into one solid block as water does when it freezes but was rather an orderly arrangement of small pieces.
- 8) The hardened water was clear as glass, allowing those within the sea to see each other.
- 9) Sweet drinking water flowed from it.

[*Abarbanel’s text of the *Mishnah* in *Avos*, like many other early editions, did not conclude with the sentence: “The Holy One, Blessed is He, brought ten plagues upon the Egyptians in Egypt and ten at the sea.” Had Abarbanel’s text included this sentence, he surely would have asked his question from it rather than from the beginning of the *Mishnah*.]

בִּיהוּה וּבִמְשָׁה עֲבָדוֹ.¹ כִּמָּה לָקוּ בְּאַצְבָּע? עֲשָׂר מִכּוֹת.
אָמור מֵעַתָּה, בְּמִצְרִים לָקוּ עֲשָׂר מִכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ
חֲמִשִּׁים מִכּוֹת.

רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר אָמַר. מִנֵּין שָׁכַל מִכָּה וּמִכָּה שֶׁהָבִיא
הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עַל הַמִּצְרִים
בְּמִצְרִים הֵיחָה שֶׁל אַרְבַּע מִכּוֹת? שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, יִשְׁלַח בָּם
חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ – עֲבָרָה, נֹזֵעַם, וְצָרָה, מִשְׁלַחַת מְלֹאכֵי
רָעִים.² עֲבָרָה, אַחַת. נֹזֵעַם, שְׁתֵּים. וְצָרָה, שְׁלֹשׁ.
מִשְׁלַחַת מְלֹאכֵי רָעִים, אַרְבַּע. אָמור מֵעַתָּה, בְּמִצְרִים
לָקוּ אַרְבָּעִים מִכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ מֵאַתֵּים מִכּוֹת.

The third group, *b'achav*, is in all the earth. This group prefaced by the statement showed that Hashem's power is (Shemos 9:14): *So that you will limitless. He is omnipotent in all know that there is none like me the earth.*

רַבִּי יוֹסִי הַגָּלִילִי / Rabbi Yosi the Galilean . . . רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר . . . רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא / Rabbi Eliezer . . . Rabbi Akiva

Q *How much were they scourged by one finger? Ten plagues. How can the Haggadah say that all ten plagues were brought about by the finger of Hashem when the only plague in which this phrase appears is the plague of lice?*

A While it is true that the phrase “finger of God” appears only in the context of the plague of lice, it does not refer to that plague alone. The sorcerers who used the phrase had been able to duplicate the previous plagues of blood and crocodiles.

They were unable to duplicate the plague of lice. At this point they realized that Moshe and Aharon had brought about the earlier plagues through miraculous means rather than sorcery, and they said that *it* – that is the broad phenomenon of the plagues rather than the particular plague of lice – *is the finger of God.*

Q Rabbis Yosi, Eliezer and Akiva have the Egyptians suffering at the sea fifty, two hundred, and two hundred and fifty plagues respectively. Do they argue with the *Mishnah* in *Avos*

Rabbi Akiva says: “What is the source for the idea that each plague that the Holy One, Blessed is He, brought upon the Egyptians in Egypt consisted of five plagues? As it is said, ‘He did send upon them the kindling of His wrath, rage, and misery, and trouble, a legation of angels of calamity.’¹ ‘The kindling of His wrath’ – one; ‘Rage’ – two; ‘And misery’ – three; ‘And trouble’ – four; ‘A legation of angels of calamity’ – five. Thus you can conclude that they suffered fifty plagues in Egypt and two hundred and fifty plagues on the sea.”

How indebted we are to *HaMakom* for all the levels of good He has done for us!

Had He taken us out of Egypt

and not inflicted judgments upon them

– it would have been enough for us.

(1) *Tehillim* 78:49.

of plagues the Egyptians suffered on the sea?

A Rabbi Eliezer accepts Rabbi Yosi's ratio of a finger in Egypt to a hand at the sea, and expands upon it.

Q *Each plague that the Holy One, Blessed is He, brought upon the Egyptians in Egypt consisted of five plagues. As we asked above [page 88], in what respect were the plagues five, and in what respect were they one?*

A Rabbi Akiva accepts Rabbi Eliezer's idea that the effects of each plague upon each of the four elements be considered four separate plagues. In addition he believes that the cumulative effect of the changes in the combination of all four elements is itself considered a separate plague. This is implied to him by the phrase *a legation of angels of calamity* which indicates a plague brought about by combination.

וְיִנּוּ / It Would Have Been Enough for Us

Q *Had He inflicted judgments upon them, and not upon their gods, it would have been enough*

for us. Had He inflicted judgments upon their gods, and not killed their firstborn, it would have been enough for us. The

רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא אָמַר. מִנֵּין שָׁכַל מַכָּה וּמַכָּה שֶׁהֵבִיא
הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא עַל הַמִּצְרִים
בְּמִצְרִים הֵיטָה שֶׁל חֲמֵשׁ מִכּוֹת? שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, יִשְׁלַח בָּם
חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ, עֲבָרָה, נֹזֵעַם, וְצָרָה, מִשְׁלַחַת מַלְאֲכֵי רָעִים.¹
חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ, אַחַת. עֲבָרָה, שְׁתֵּים. נֹזֵעַם, שְׁלֹשׁ. וְצָרָה,
אַרְבַּע. מִשְׁלַחַת מַלְאֲכֵי רָעִים, חֲמֵשׁ. אָמַר מֵעַתָּה,
בְּמִצְרִים לָקוּ חֲמִשִּׁים מִכּוֹת, וְעַל הַיָּם לָקוּ חֲמִשִּׁים
וּמֵאֲתָיִם מִכּוֹת.

בְּמָה מַעֲלֹת טוֹבוֹת לַמָּקוֹם עָלֵינוּ.

אֱלוֹ הוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם, וְלֹא עָשָׂה בָּהֶם שְׁפָטִים, דִּינּוּ.

10) After a Jew finished drinking, the spout of water from which he drank would harden in mid-air.

Q *Rabbi Eliezer says: What is the source for the idea that each plague which the Holy One, Blessed is He, brought upon the Egyptians in Egypt consisted of four plagues? What does this mean? In what respect was the plague of blood, for example, one plague, and in what respect was it four?*

A Though the different plagues had their primary effect through or upon one of the four elements (fire, air, earth, and water) as we have mentioned above regarding the plagues (pages 81-85), all of the plagues did include aspects which involved changes in all of the elements. Rabbi Eliezer means that in this respect each plague

consisted of four plagues.

Q [Unlike our text, Abarbanel's text of the Haggadah read: *The kindling of His wrath – one; rage – two; and misery – three; a legation of angels of calamity – four.* Abarbanel then asks:] Why doesn't Rabbi Eliezer use *and trouble* to derive an additional plague?

A Rabbi Eliezer does not view *trouble* and *a legation of angels of evil* as two separate things. He believes that the verse should be rendered "the trouble of a legation of angels of evil."

Q *Thus you can conclude that they suffered forty plagues in Egypt and two hundred plagues on the sea.* Where did Rabbi Eliezer prove anything about the number

Had He inflicted judgments upon them
and not upon their gods
— it would have been enough for us.

Had He inflicted judgments upon their gods
and not killed their firstborn
— it would have been enough for us.

Had He killed their firstborn and not given us their riches
— it would have been enough for us.

Had He given us their riches and not split the sea for us
— it would have been enough for us.

Had He split the sea for us
and not let us pass through it on dry land
— it would have been enough for us.

Had He let us pass through it on dry land
and not sunk our foes in it
— it would have been enough for us.

Egyptians would have overtaken the Jews and destroyed them!

How can he say *had He split the sea for us and not let us pass through it on dry land — it would have been enough for us?* If that had happened, the Jews would have drowned!

How can he say *had He sunk our foes in it [the sea] and not satisfied our needs in the desert for forty years — it would have been enough for us?* If that had happened, we would have starved!

How can he say *had He brought us near Him at Mount Sinai and not given us the Torah — it would have been enough for us?* What good would coming near Him at Mount Sinai have been if He would not have given us the Torah?

On the other hand, וישם has some surprising omissions. Why is there no mention of the Well of Miriam, the Clouds of Glory, or the miracle of the quails? Why is there no mention of the miraculous victories over Og, Sichon, and the kings of Canaan, and the conquest of their lands?

A While it is true that Hashem was bound by His promise at the Covenant between the Parts to punish the Egyptians and to give the Jews their wealth, the very fact that He included these assurances in the Covenant is an expression of His kindness.

When Rabbi Akiva says that if He had *not split the sea for us — it would have been enough for us*, he does not mean to say that it would

אֱלֹהֵי עֲשֶׂה בָּהֶם שְׁפָטִים, וְלֹא עֲשֶׂה בְּאֱלֹהֵיהֶם דִּינֵנו.
 אֱלֹהֵי עֲשֶׂה בְּאֱלֹהֵיהֶם, וְלֹא הָרַג אֶת בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם, דִּינֵנו.
 אֱלֹהֵי הָרַג אֶת בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם, וְלֹא נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת מְמוֹנָם, דִּינֵנו.
 אֱלֹהֵי נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת מְמוֹנָם, וְלֹא קָרַע לָנוּ אֶת הַיָּם, דִּינֵנו.
 אֱלֹהֵי קָרַע לָנוּ אֶת הַיָּם,

וְלֹא הֶעֱבִירָנוּ בְּתוֹכֹוּ בְּחֶרֶבָה, דִּינֵנו.
 אֱלֹהֵי הֶעֱבִירָנוּ בְּתוֹכֹוּ בְּחֶרֶבָה, דִּינֵנו.
 וְלֹא שָׁקַע צָרֵינוּ בְּתוֹכֹוּ, דִּינֵנו.

judgments He inflicted upon them obviously refers to the Ten Plagues. Why, then, does the Haggadah make a separate issue of the killing of the firstborn?

If there is some reason to mention the killing of the firstborn separately, why doesn't the Haggadah mention it here immediately after the other plagues rather than separating it from them by mentioning the judgments upon their gods?

A The killing of the firstborn is mentioned separately from the other plagues because it was qualitatively different from them. The Egyptians deserved to suffer the plagues as punishment for their cruel enslavement of the Jewish people. In this respect, however, the firstborn were no worse than other Egyptians. There was another reason for their being marked for death. Because the firstborn are the holiest, Hashem

destroyed them along with the Egyptian gods. Thus, we give thanks for the killing of the firstborn after the inflicting of judgments upon the Egyptian gods because it is a consequence of the destruction of those gods.

Q Rabbi Akiva's choice of what to include and what not to include in *דינו* (*It would have been enough for us*) is perplexing. He suggests that Hashem need not have inflicted judgments upon the Egyptians nor given the departing Jews their wealth. But how could this be so? Wasn't Hashem bound by His promise to Avraham at the Covenant between the Parts in which He said explicitly (*Bereishis 15:14*): *they shall go out with great wealth*? Other parts of *דינו* are even more problematic. How can he say *had He given us their riches and not split the sea for us* – *it would have been enough for us*? If that had happened, the

Had He sunk our foes in it
 and not satisfied our needs in the desert for forty years
 — it would have been enough for us.

Had He satisfied our needs in the desert for forty years
 and not fed us the Manna
 — it would have been enough for us.

Had He fed us the Manna and not given us the *Shabbos*
 — it would have been enough for us.

Had He given us the *Shabbos*
 and not brought us near Him at Mount Sinai
 — it would have been enough for us.

Had He brought us near Him at Mount Sinai
 and not given us the Torah
 — it would have been enough for us.

Had He given us the Torah
 and not brought us into the Land of Israel
 — it would have been enough for us.

Had he brought us into the Land of Israel
 and not built for us the *Beis HaMikdash*
 — it would have been enough for us.

performing miracles. The miracle of having the Jews pass through on dry land falls under the second category. Hashem could have split the sea and let the Jews cross the muddy seabed. But this would have been an arduous trek. Instead, Hashem brought a strong east wind to blow throughout the night, to dry the seabed and make it easy to walk on. At the same time and for the same reason, He leveled the seabed, flattening its hills and filling its canyons. It is only with regard to this manifestation of Hashem's concern for the welfare of His people that we say *it would have been enough for us*.

When Rabbi Akiva says that if Hashem had *not satisfied our needs in the desert for forty years — it would have been enough for us*, he does not mean to say that it would have been all right for us to starve in the desert. Hashem could have led the Jews to the Land of Israel by way of the richly cultivated land of the Philistines. Instead, He had them travel through the desert, as it was the most suitable place to initiate them into the ways of Torah and *mitzvos*. To achieve this end He sustained them plentifully in a miraculous manner for forty full years. It is only with regard to this manifestation of Hashem's

אֱלֹהֵי שָׁקַע צָרֵינוּ בְּתוֹכוֹ,
 וְלֹא סָפַק צָרָכֵנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה, דִּינוּ.
 אֱלֹהֵי שָׁפַק צָרָכֵנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה,
 וְלֹא הָאֵכִילָנוּ אֶת הַמֶּן, דִּינוּ.
 אֱלֹהֵי הָאֵכִילָנוּ אֶת הַמֶּן,
 וְלֹא נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַשִּׁבְתָּה, דִּינוּ.
 אֱלֹהֵי נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַשִּׁבְתָּה,
 וְלֹא קָרַבָנוּ לִפְנֵי הַר סִינַי, דִּינוּ.
 אֱלֹהֵי קָרַבָנוּ לִפְנֵי הַר סִינַי,
 וְלֹא נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה, דִּינוּ.
 אֱלֹהֵי נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה,
 וְלֹא הִכְנִיסָנוּ לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, דִּינוּ.
 אֱלֹהֵי הִכְנִיסָנוּ לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל,
 וְלֹא בָנָה לָנוּ אֶת בֵּית הַבְּחִירָה, דִּינוּ.

have been all right for us to walk straight into the unsplit sea. Hashem could have saved the Jews in countless different ways. He could have stopped the Egyptians with a hail of stones long before they approached the Jews, for instance. He could have seen to it that Pharaoh would not pursue them in the first place. After all, it was only due to Hashem miraculously making him stubborn, "hardening his heart," that he decided to pursue them in the first place. Instead Hashem chose to split the sea and drown the Egyptians in it before the Jews' very eyes to demonstrate that He roots out the doers of evil. It is only with regard to this manifestation of divine justice and

vengeance that we say *it would have been enough for us*.

When Rabbi Akiva says that *if He had not let us pass through it on dry land — it would have been enough for us*, he does not mean to say that it would have been all right for us to walk through the water. The path that the Jews took through the sea did not lead them across it from one bank to the other. They traveled in a bow-shaped arc and emerged on the same bank from which they entered. Why then did Hashem take them through the sea? There were two reasons. The first was to lure the Egyptians into the sea to give them their just due, as we have mentioned above. The other was to demonstrate His greatness by

How multiple, then, is our debt to *HaMakom*. For He took us out of Egypt, and inflicted judgments upon them and upon their gods, and killed their firstborn, and gave us their riches, and split the sea for us, and let us pass through it on dry land, and sank our foes in it, and satisfied our needs in the desert for forty years, and fed us the Manna, and gave us the *Shabbos*, and brought us near Him at Mount Sinai, and gave us the Torah, and brought us into the Land of Israel, and built for us the *Beis HaMikdash* to atone for all of our sins.

divine revelation that we say *it would have been enough for us*.

Others explain that what Rabbi Akiva means to say here is that Hashem did not have to give us the Torah in its entirety, but rather could have given us merely a few *mitzvos* as He did to Adam, Noah, and Avraham.

Let us conclude by pointing out that Rabbi Akiva lists fifteen levels of good that Hashem has performed for us. These correspond to the fifteen Songs of the Steps which King David wrote in the Book of *Tehillim*. These correspond to the fifteen aspects of Hashem's kindness that He bestowed upon the Jewish people that are mentioned in the book of *Yechezkel* (Chapter 16). These, in turn, correspond to the fifteen steps on the grounds of the *Beis HaMikdash* that led from the *Ezras Nashim* [women's area] to the *Ezras Yisrael* [men's area]. It is for this reason that Rabbi Akiva uses the term מַעְלוֹת [levels] rather than חֲסָדִים [kindnesses], as it has the alternative meaning of "steps".

Q *Had He let us pass through it on dry land and not sunk our foes in it – it would have been enough for us.* How could the Egyptians have been so foolhardy as to pursue the Jews into the sea when they saw that Hashem was performing a miracle on the Jews' behalf? This is especially difficult in light of the fact that they had just suffered ten plagues from which the Jews were spared.

A The Torah says (*Shemos* 14:19-20), *And the angel of God who went before the camp of Israel moved away and went behind them. And the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them. And it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel, and there was cloud and darkness.* In the midst of the darkness, the Egyptians blundered into the split sea thinking they were still on the shore. By the time of the morning watch, the end of the night, all of the Egyptians were in the sea. It is only then that the Torah says

עַל אַחַת בָּמָה, וּבָמָה טוֹבָה כְּפוּלָה וּמִכְפֶּלֶת לַמָּקוֹם
עָלֵינוּ. שֶׁהוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם, וַעֲשֵׂה בָהֶם שְׁפָטִים,
וַעֲשֵׂה בְּאַלְהֵיהֶם, וְהָרַג אֶת בְּכוֹרֵיהֶם, וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת
מִמּוֹנָם, וְקָרַע לָנוּ אֶת הַיָּם, וְהַעֲבִירָנוּ בְּתוֹכּוֹ בְּחֶרֶבָה,
וְשָׁקַע צָרֵינוּ בְּתוֹכּוֹ, וְסָפַק צָרָכָנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה,
וְהָאֲכִילָנוּ אֶת הַמֶּן, וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַשֶּׁבֶת, וְקָרָכָנוּ לִפְנֵי הָרִ
סִינִי, וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה, וְהַכְנִיסָנוּ לָאָרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּבָנָה
לָנוּ אֶת בֵּית הַבְּחִירָה, לְכַפֵּר עַל כָּל עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ.

concern for the spiritual develop-
ment of His people that we say *it*
would have been enough for us.

He satisfied our needs in the
desert by feeding us the manna.
He could have fed us anything,
but He chose to feed us the best of
all possible foods. It was a food
that nourished those who ate it
spiritually as well as physically, a
food that the Sages say is eaten by
the ministering angels. To babies
it had a creamy taste. The young
would make it into cakes. To the
sickly, it tasted like honey wafers.
Adults would cook it in a kettle.
To non-Jews, it was like the cori-
ander seed.

There were eight miraculous
aspects of the manna.

- 1) It was created out of thin air.
- 2) It was a miracle that lasted
for forty years, the longest of any
of the miracles mentioned in
Tanach.

- 3) No matter how much manna
one gathered, one ended up with
the same quantity — one *omer*.

- 4) If any of it was left over until
morning, it became rotten and

wormy.

- 5) On *Shabbos*, however, what
was left over remained fresh.

- 6) It would not come down on
Shabbos.

- 7) It stopped coming down
when they reached inhabited
land.

- 8) A jar of it was stored in the
Mishkan and lasted for genera-
tions.

All of this shows the divine
quality of this food.

When Rabbi Akiva says that if
Hashem had *brought us near Him*
at Mount Sinai and not given us
the Torah — *it would have been*
enough for us, he does not mean
to say that we could have done
without the Torah. Hashem did
not have to speak the Ten Com-
mandments Himself. Considering
the spiritual attainments of the
Jewish people at the time, it
would have been more appropri-
ate for Moshe to have spoken
them. But Hashem wanted to give
His people even more than they
were worthy of. It is only with
regard to this added element of

Rabban Gamliel used to say: Whoever has not discussed these three things on Pesach has not fulfilled his obligation, namely:

the *Korban Pesach*, *matzah*, and *maror*.

What is the reason for the *Korban Pesach* that our ancestors used to eat at the time that the *Beis HaMikdash* was standing? Because the Holy One, Blessed is He, passed over the houses of our ancestors in Egypt, as it says, "You will say: It is a sacrifice of Pesach unto Hashem, for He passed over the houses of the Children of Israel in Egypt when He smote Egypt, and He saved our houses. And [upon hearing this] the people bowed down and prostrated themselves."¹

The middle *matzah* is lifted and displayed while the following paragraph is recited.

What is the reason behind this *matzah* which we eat? Because the dough of our ancestors did not have enough time to be leavened before the Ultimate King, the Holy One, Blessed is He, revealed Himself to them and redeemed them, as it says, "They baked the dough which they took out of Egypt into cakes of *matzah* as it did not rise, for they were driven from Egypt and could not linger; nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves."²

(1) *Shemos* 12:27. (2) 12:39.

phrase used is (ibid. 12:8): *With matzos and maror they will eat it* [the *Korban Pesach*]. The linking of *matzos* with *maror* indicates that both are intended to commemorate bondage. We have mentioned above in our discussion of *הַאֲרֵץ הַזֹּאת עֲנִיָּה* (*This is the poor bread*) that *matzah*, being a hard and simple food, a staple of the diet of slaves, can indeed have this connotation. On the other hand, when the commandment is repeated, it appears to be intended

to commemorate the speed of the redemption, as it says (*Devarim* 16:3): *Seven days you will eat with it matzos . . . because you departed the land of Egypt in haste*.

Rabban Gamliel resolved this contradiction by proposing that the two verses refer to two different periods. The first verse, which gives the reason for eating *matzah* as a commemoration of bondage, applies to the Pesach which the Jews celebrated before they left Egypt. The second verse gives the

רִבֵּן גַּמְלִיאל הָיָה אוֹמֵר. כָּל שְׁלֹא אָמַר שְׁלֹשָׁה
דְּבָרִים אֵלּוּ בַּפֶּסַח, לֹא יֵצֵא יְדֵי
חוּבָתוֹ, וְאֵלּוּ הֵן,

פֶּסַח. מַצָּה. וּמָרוֹר.

פֶּסַח שֶׁהָיוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ אוֹכְלִים בְּזֶמֶן שְׁבִית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ
הָיָה קָיָם, עַל שׁוּם מָה? עַל שׁוּם שֶׁפֶּסַח הַקָּדוֹשׁ
בְּרוּךְ הוּא עַל בִּתְּי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם. שְׁנֵאמַר,
וְאִמְרָתָם, וְזֶכַח פֶּסַח הוּא לִיהוּה, אֲשֶׁר פֶּסַח עַל בִּתְּי בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִצְרַיִם בְּנִגְפּוֹ אֶת מִצְרַיִם, וְאֶת בִּתְּיֵנוּ הִצִּיל,
וַיִּקְדֵּה הָעָם וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ.¹

The middle matzah is lifted and displayed while the following paragraph is recited.

מַצָּה זוֹ שָׂאֵנוּ אוֹכְלִים, עַל שׁוּם מָה? עַל שׁוּם שְׁלֹא
הִסְפִּיק בִּצְקָם שֶׁל אֲבוֹתֵינוּ לְהַחֲמִיץ, עַד
שֶׁנִּגְלָה עֲלֵיהֶם מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא
וּגְאֻלָּם. שְׁנֵאמַר, וַיֹּאפּוּ אֶת הַבֶּצֶק אֲשֶׁר הוּצִיאוּ
מִמִּצְרַיִם עֲגַת מִצּוֹת כִּי לֹא חָמֵץ, כִּי גִדְּשׁוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם,
וְלֹא יָכְלוּ לְהַתְמַהֲמַה, וְגַם יָצָה לֹא עָשׂוּ לָהֶם.²

(ibid. v. 24) that Hashem gazed at them through a pillar of cloud and fire which made the Egyptians' situation clear to them. But by then, it was too late to escape.

פֶּסַח מַצָּה וּמָרוֹר / Pesach, Matzah, and Maror

Q Because the dough of our forefathers did not have enough time to be leavened. How can Rabban Gamliel say this is the reason for eating *matzah* when the commandment to eat *matzah* was given weeks before the

actual Exodus?

A Rabban Gamliel was faced with an apparent contradiction. When the *mitzvah* of eating *matzah* first appears in the Torah, before the actual Exodus from Egypt, the

The maror is lifted and displayed while the following paragraph is recited.

What is the reason behind this *maror* which we eat?

Because the Egyptians embittered the lives of our ancestors in Egypt, as it says, "They embittered their lives with hard labor at mortar and bricks, and all sorts of work in the field. All of the work which they made them do was rigorous."¹

In each and every generation one is obligated to view himself as though he has gone out of Egypt, as it is said, "And you shall tell your son on that day, saying 'it is because of this that Hashem did so for me when I went out of Egypt.'"² Not only did the Holy One, Blessed is He, redeem our ancestors, but He redeemed us, too, with them, as it is said, "He took us out of there to bring us to and give us the land which He had sworn to our fathers."³

(1) Shemos 1:14. (2) 13:8. (3) Devarim 6:23.

of *Pesach Sheni*, the sacrifice brought on the fourteenth of Iyar by those who were unable to bring the *Korban Pesach* at its proper time, the Torah says (*Bamidbar* 9:11-12): *In the second month, on the fourteenth day, they shall prepare it. With matzos and maror they shall eat it. They shall not leave over from it until morning, nor shall they break a bone in it. In accordance with all of the laws of the Pesach sacrifice they will prepare it.*

This commandment was given the year after the original Pesach in Egypt. Still, it included the obligation to eat *maror* and is described as being *in accordance with all of the laws of the Pesach*

sacrifice. Thus it is clear that eating *maror* is a *mitzvah* which was not meant to be kept only on the night of the first Pesach.

QAs it is said: He took us out of there to bring us to, and to give us, the land which He had sworn to our fathers. This source makes it seem that the obligation of each individual to make himself appear as though he had personally come out of Egypt is contingent upon the Jewish people's being in possession of the Land of Israel. Why then is the commandment binding upon us after the Exile?

The maror is lifted and displayed while the following paragraph is recited.

מָרֹר זֶה שֶׁאֲנִי אוֹכְלִים, עַל שׁוּם מָה? עַל שׁוּם
שֶׁמָּרְרוּ הַמִּצְרִים אֶת חַיֵּי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמִצְרַיִם.
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, וַיִּמְרְרוּ אֶת חַיֵּיהֶם, בַּעֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה, בְּחֹמֶר
וּבִלְבָנִים, וּבְכָל עֲבֹדָה בְּשָׂדֶה, אֶת כָּל עֲבֹדָתָם אֲשֶׁר
עָבְדוּ בָהֶם בְּפָרָה.¹

בְּכָל דּוֹר וְדוֹר חַיֵּב אָדָם לִרְאוֹת אֶת עֲצֻמוֹ כְּאִלּוּ
הוּא יֵצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם. שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, וְהִגַּדְתָּ לְבִנְךָ
בְּיוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר, בַּעֲבוּר זֶה עָשָׂה יְהוָה לִי, בְּצֵאתִי
מִמִּצְרַיִם.² לֹא אֶת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בְּלִבֶּד גָּאֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ
הוּא, אֲלָא אֲף אֲתָנוּ גָּאֵל עַמָּהֶם. שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, וְאוֹתָנוּ
הוֹצִיא מִשָּׁם, לְמַעַן הִבִּיא אֶתָּנוּ לְתֶת לָנוּ אֶת הָאָרֶץ
אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ.³

reason for the performance of the *mitzvah* by future generations. It is for this reason that Rabban Gamliel says *what is the reason behind this matzah which we eat*, with the stress on *this* and *we*, in contradistinction to the *matzah* that our ancestors ate in Egypt, which was eaten for a different reason.

Q *What is the reason behind this maror which we eat? How do we know that eating maror*

is a commandment which applies to all generations? Perhaps eating maror was required only on the Pesach of the actual Exodus, just as putting blood on the doorposts and wearing a belt around

one's waist while eating the sacrifice were commandments which applied only at that time. The commandments of eating the *Korban Pesach* and *matzah* appear elsewhere in the Torah outside the context of the Pesach of the actual Exodus [*Shemos* 34:25, *Vayikra* 23:5-6, *Devarim* 16:1-8] making it abundantly clear that they apply to future generations, but nowhere else is the commandment of eating *maror* repeated.

A Though the *mitzvah* of eating *maror* on Pesach is not repeated in the Torah, *maror* does nonetheless appear elsewhere. In its discussion

The matzos are covered and the cup is lifted and held until it is to be drunk. According to some customs, however, the cup is put down after the following paragraph, in which case the matzos should once more be uncovered.

Therefore it is our duty to thank, praise, laud, glorify, aggrandize, extol, bless, exalt and acclaim the One who performed all of these miracles for our ancestors and for us. He has brought us from slavery to freedom, from anguish to joy, from mourning to festivity, from darkness to great light, and from servitude to redemption. Let us say before Him a new song, Praise Hashem!

לְפִיכֶּךָ אֲנַחְנוּ חִיבִים / Therefore, It Is Our Duty

Q [Although our text of the *Haggadah* has nine expressions of praise here, Abarbanel apparently had only seven in his text of the *Haggadah*.] *Therefore, it is our duty to thank, praise, laud, glorify, aggrandize, bless, and acclaim.* Why does the *Haggadah* here use seven different expressions for praise?

A The seven expressions of praise correspond to the seven great articles of faith we can learn from the Exodus.

1) The existence of a prime cause of existence. That this was demonstrated by the Exodus can be seen from the phrasing of the first of the Ten Commandments (*Shemos* 20:2): *I am Hashem your God Who took you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of slaves.*

2) Hashem's unity. This was demonstrated at the killing of the firstborn, about which Hashem said (*ibid.* 12:12): *I am Hashem,*

and upon which the *Haggadah* has commented — *I am He and none other.*

3) Hashem's knowledge of all that goes on in the world, as it says (*ibid.* 3:7): *I have seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and I have heard their cries because of their taskmasters, for I know their pain.*

4) The principle of reward and punishment was demonstrated through the Egyptians' suffering the Ten Plagues and the Jews being spared them.

5) Hashem's omnipotence can be seen from the many miracles He performed in the process of the Exodus.

6) This, in turn, serves to reinforce the idea that the world has not always existed but is rather the creation of an earlier cause.

7) Moshe Rabbenu's prediction of each plague was a proof of the reality of prophecy.

Alternatively, the seven expressions of praise can be seen as corresponding to the seven benefits gained by the Jews as a result

The matzos are covered and the cup is lifted and held until it is to be drunk. According to some customs, however, the cup is put down after the following paragraph, in which case the matzos should once more be uncovered.

לְפִיכָךְ אֲנַחֲנוּ חַיִּיִּים לְהוֹדוֹת, לְהַלֵּל, לְשַׁבַּח, לְפָאֵר,
לְרוֹמֵם, לְהַדִּיר, לְבָרֵךְ, לַעֲלֹה, וּלְקַלֵּס, לְמִי
שֶׁעָשָׂה לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ וּלְנוּ אֶת כָּל הַנִּסִּים הָאֵלֹּה, הוֹצִיאָנוּ
מֵעֲבָדוֹת לְחֵרוֹת, מִיָּגוֹן לְשִׁמְחָה, וּמֵאֵבֶל לְיוֹם טוֹב,
וּמֵאֲפֵלָה לְאוֹר גָּדוֹל, וּמִשְׁעָבוֹד לְגֵאֲלָה, וְנֹאמַר לְפָנָיו
שִׁירָה חֲדָשָׁה, הַלְלוּיָהּ.

A The Exodus from Egypt was a clear demonstration of the most fundamental principles of the Jewish faith. Its reenactment at the *Seder* is a reinforcement of these principles which is essential for their preservation in the hearts of the Jewish people.

On the night of the Exodus, Hashem showed His omnipotence. He showed that He is the Creator of the world by demonstrating that laws of nature apply only insofar as He wants them to. Through punishing the wicked and rewarding the worthy, He showed how man's life is governed by His Providence. The fulfillment of His predictions and the warnings of Moshe Rabbeinu clearly proved that Hashem communicates with man through His prophets.

All of the commandments of the Torah which commemorate the Exodus are intended to remind us of these principles and the various other lessons of the Exodus. The most direct of these are the

mitzvos of the *Seder*, through which one makes himself appear as if he himself had personally come out of Egypt. The importance of this is obviously eternal. Bringing the verse *He took us out of there to bring us to, and to give us, the land which He had sworn to our fathers* as a source for this idea is in no way meant to limit it to those times in which we are in possession of the Land of Israel. The stress here is on the *etc.* * which follows the verse, directing us to the next verses which read: *And Hashem commanded us to perform all of these statutes, to fear Hashem our God, for our good for all time, so that we may live as we do today. And it will be considered virtuous of us if we take care to perform all of these commandments before Hashem our God as He has commanded us.* The message of these verses is clear. The acts that we perform on this night, whatever period in our history we perform them in, will bring us the eternal life of the soul, as well as corporeal life.

[*Abarbanel's text apparently read לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ נִשְׁבַּע אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע followed by וגו' meaning "etc."]

Praise Hashem! Praise, servants of Hashem. Praise the name of Hashem! May the name of Hashem be blessed from now unto eternity. From the dawning place of the sun to its setting place, praised is the name of Hashem. Exalted above all nations is Hashem. Above the heavens is His glory. Who is like Hashem our God, Who dwells on high,

COMMENTARY ON THE HALLEL

The Talmud asks (*Pesachim* 118a): “Once we have the Great *Hallel* [*Tehillim* 136 – see page 132], why do we recite this other *Hallel*? Because it mentions five things – the Exodus from Egypt, the splitting of the Red Sea, the giving of the Torah, the resurrection of the dead, and the pains of the coming of *Mashiach*.”

The Exodus from Egypt is referred to in the verse *When Yisrael went out of Egypt*. The splitting of the Red Sea is referred to in *The sea saw and fled*. The giving of the Torah is referred to in *The mountains skipped like rams*. The resurrection of the dead is referred to in *I walk before Hashem*. The pains of the coming of the *Mashiach* are referred to in *Not for us, Hashem, not for us*.

The Midrash says on the verse *Praise Hashem! Praise, servants of Hashem!* [*Yalkut Shimoni, Tehillim* 872]: “This alludes to the idea in the verse *I remember my song at night* (*Tehillim* 77:7). Rabbi Yehudah the son of Rabbi Shimon says, Israel is saying before Hashem, ‘Master of the

World! I remember the miracles that You performed for me at night in Egypt, and I would sing and play about them for You at night.’”

From these sources and others like them we see that the Sages viewed the first two paragraphs of the *Hallel* as referring to the Exodus, while the following paragraphs allude to future events such as the coming of *Mashiach* and the resurrection of the dead. Therefore, it is specifically after these two paragraphs that the Sages inserted the blessing אֲשֶׁר נִצְּלָנוּ ... *Who redeemed us*, and from there we go on to the meal and the *mitzvos* associated with it which also share this theme. It is only after this that we say the conclusion of the *Hallel* whose theme is the miracles and redemptions of the future.

הַלְלֵנוּ – *Praise Hashem!* The use of the two-letter name of Hashem (יה) alludes to the idea stated in the Midrash [*Yalkut Shimoni, Yeshayah* 429] that Hashem created the world with half of His name. That is to say, we can refer to Hashem from two perspectives – either that of His true essence or that of His relationship to and intervention in life on earth. Man is incapable of fathoming the first

הַלְלוּיָהּ הַלְלוּ עַבְדֵי יְהוָה, הַלְלוּ אֶת שֵׁם יְהוָה. יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבָרָךְ, מִעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם. מִמִּזְרַח שֶׁשֶׁשׁ עַד מְבֹאוֹ, מִהַלֵּל שֵׁם יְהוָה. כִּסֵּף עַל כָּל גּוֹיִם יְהוָה, עַל הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ. מִי בִיהוּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, הַמְגַבִּיהִי לְשָׁבֶת.

of the Exodus: 1) freedom, 2) vengeance, 3) wealth, 4) honor, 5) perfect faith in Hashem, 6) the Torah, 7) taking possession of the Holy Land.

Q What are the precise differences between the five forms of God's benevolence [*from slavery to freedom, from anguish to joy, from mourning to festivity, from darkness to great light, and from servitude to redemption*] mentioned here?

A The five forms of Hashem's benevolence mentioned here correspond to five distinct aspects of hardship suffered by the Jews in Egypt from which they were saved.

First of all, the very fact of

being subordinate to the will of others was a great tribulation. Hence, we acknowledge *He has brought us forth from slavery to freedom*.

Second, they were subject to rigorous labor — *from servitude to redemption*.

Third, to a people of noble character, slavery was a state which was particularly unnatural and degrading — *from anguish to joy*.

Fourth, while the Jews were enslaved in Egypt, they had to work incessantly without any time to rest or to call their own. Once they were redeemed, however, they were immediately free to celebrate the holiday of Pesach — *from mourning to festivity*.

Finally, during their period of slavery, the Jews were lacking perfect faith in Hashem — *from darkness to great light*.

הלל / Hallel

Q We conclude our series of questions with a few points regarding the *Hallel*. Why is the recitation of the *Hallel* divided into two halves, one before the meal and one after? Why is the blessing... *Who has redeemed us*... recited in the middle of the *Hallel*? Wouldn't it be more

appropriate to recite it at its conclusion? Why is *pour out Your wrath* inserted in the *Hallel* on the night of the *Seder* but not on any other occasion?

A The answers to these questions will be discussed in the course of the commentary on the *Hallel*.

Who lowers Himself to scrutinize the heavens and the earth? He raises the impoverished from the dust. From the trash heaps He lifts the indigent. To seat them with nobles, with the nobles of His people. He transforms a barren woman into a happy mother of children. Praise Hashem!¹

When Yisrael went out of Egypt, the house of Yaakov from a nation of foreign language, then Yehudah became His sanctifier, Yisrael His dominion. The sea saw and fled. The Jordan turned back. The mountains skipped like rams; the hills — like lambs. What is it, sea, that makes you flee? Jordan, what makes you turn back?

(1) Tehillim 113.

Exodus, and it is only from that point on that man could properly praise Him.

In answer to the fourth question (Where is it appropriate to say *Hallel*?) the verse says, *from the dawning place of the sun to its setting place, praised is the name of Hashem*.

רם על כל גוים ה' — *Exalted above all nations is Hashem*. All the world, *from the dawning place of the sun to its setting place*, recognizes Hashem, but there is a difference between the way the Jews and other nations relate to Him. Other nations acknowledge Hashem as the Creator of the world but believe that His awesome stature keeps Him aloof from direct contact with man or knowledge of the events in his life. *Exalted above all nations* — as opposed to the Jews — *is Hashem*, for they believe that *above the heavens* — but not below them — *is His glory*.

But this is not our belief. We

believe that despite His exalted stature, Hashem *lowers Himself to scrutinize the heavens and the earth*. He involves Himself in the lives of all mankind, down to the lowliest indigent or the most hopeless barren woman. Because we recognize that all existence is totally in His hands, and that He can suddenly reverse even the most desperate situation, as He did with the Jewish people in Egypt, we exhort, *Praise Hashem!*

היה יהודה לקדשו — *Then Yehudah became His sanctifier*. The Midrash (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 13:7) relates that when the Jews approached the Red Sea they were afraid to enter until Nachshon, *nasi* (prince) of the tribe of Yehudah jumped in. He was followed by members of his own tribe, and finally, by the rest of the Jewish people. Thus the tribe of Yehudah, by their demonstration of faith in the word of Hashem, sanctified His name among Yisrael.

הַמְשִׁפִּילִי לְרֹאוֹת, בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ. מְקִימִי מַעֲפָר דָּל,
מֵאֲשַׁפֶּת יָרִים אֲבִיוֹן. לְהוֹשִׁיבִי עִם נְדִיבִים, עִם נְדִיבִי
עָמוֹ. מוֹשִׁיבִי עֵקֶרֶת הַבַּיִת, אִם הַבָּנִים שְׂמִיחָה, הַלְלוּיָהּ.¹

בְּצֵאת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם, בֵּית יַעֲקֹב מֵעַם לַעֲזוֹ. הִיְתָה
יְהוּדָה לְקָדְשׁוֹ, יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמְשָׁלוֹתָיו. הַיָּם רָאָה
וַיִּנָּס, הַיָּרְדֵּן יָסַב לְאַחֹר. הַהָרִים רָקְדוּ כְּאֵילִים, גִּבְעוֹת
כְּבָנֵי צֶאֱן. מֶה לָּךְ הַיָּם כִּי תִנוֹס, הַיָּרְדֵּן תִּסָּב לְאַחֹר.

perspective or relating to it at all. It is only through the second perspective that man can relate to Hashem's role in the world — hence the assertion of the Midrash that the world was created with only half of His name. By the same token, the use of the two-letter name of Hashem in the phrase *praise Hashem!* is saying that we are only capable of praising half of His name, that aspect of His being which we perceive as being involved with our lives, but His true essence is utterly beyond us.

The first chapter of *Hallel* answers four questions about *Hallel* in general:

- 1) For whom is it appropriate to say *Hallel*?
- 2) About whom is it appropriate to say *Hallel*?
- 3) When is it appropriate to say *Hallel*?
- 4) Where is it appropriate to say *Hallel*?

In answer to the first question (For whom is it appropriate to say *Hallel*?) it says, *praise, servants of Hashem!* Not everyone has the right to praise Hashem. It is the

privilege of His servants. This idea is echoed in the prayers of *Shabbos* where we find phrases such as *לְיִשְׁרִים גָּאוֹה תְהִלָּה* (*It is fitting for the upright to extol*) and *בְּפִי יִשְׁרִים תְּתַרְוֶם* (*By the mouth of the upright You are exalted*).

In answer to the second question (About whom is it appropriate to say *Hallel*?) the verse says, *praise the name of Hashem*, by way of acknowledging that we have no comprehension of Hashem's true being, so all we can praise is His holy name which has been taught by His prophets.

In answer to the third question (When is it appropriate to say *Hallel*?) the verse says, *may the name of Hashem be blessed from now unto eternity*, with the stress on the word *now*. As we mentioned above at the beginning of the commentary on the *Hallel*, the Sages understood this chapter of *Hallel* as alluding to the Exodus. The phrase *from now unto eternity* indicates that Hashem never fully demonstrated His omnipotence until *now*, that is the time of the performance of the miracles of the

Mountains, why do you prance like rams? Hills, why do you skip like lambs? Tremble before the Master, earth. Before the God of Yaakov; Who turns the rock into a pond of water, the flintrock into a fountain of water.¹

According to all customs the cup is lifted and the matzos covered
during the recitation of this blessing

[On Saturday substitute the bracketed phrase for the preceding phrase.]

Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the universe,
Who has redeemed us and redeemed our ancestors from
Egypt, and enabled us to live to this night, to eat on it
matzah and *maror*. So, Hashem, our God and the God of our
fathers, may You enable us to live to other festivals and
holidays which will come to meet us in peace, happy in the
reconstruction of Your city and joyful in Your worship. May
we eat there of the offerings and Paschal sacrifices [the
Paschal sacrifices and the offerings] whose blood will reach
the wall of Your altar for acceptance. And may we thank
You with a new song for our redemption and the liberation
of our soul. Blessed are You, Hashem, Who redeemed
Yisrael.

Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the Universe,
Who creates the fruit of the vine.

The second cup is drunk while leaning on the left side —
preferably the entire cup, but at least most of it.

RACHTZAH

The hands are washed for matzah and the following blessing is recited. It is preferable to
bring water and a basin to the head of the household at the Seder table.

Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the Universe,
Who has sanctified us with His commandments and
commanded us with regard to washing the hands.

(1) *Tehillim* 114.

הָהָרִים תִּרְקְדוּ כְּאֵילִים, גִּבְעוֹת כְּבָנֵי צֶאֱן. מִלִּפְנֵי אֲדוֹן
 חוֹלֵי אֶרֶץ, מִלִּפְנֵי אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב. הַהֶפְכִי הַצּוֹר אֶגֶם מֵיָם,
 חֲלָמִישׁ לְמַעֲיָנוּ מֵיָם.¹

According to all customs the cup is lifted and the matzos covered
 during the recitation of this blessing.

[On Saturday night substitute the bracketed phrase for the preceding phrase.]

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר גָּאֲלָנוּ
 וְגָאֵל אֶת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם, וְהִגִּיעָנוּ הַלֵּילָה
 הַזֶּה לְאֹכֵל בּוֹ מִצָּה וּמְרוֹר. בֵּן יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֵלֵהִי
 אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, יִגִּיעָנוּ לְמוֹעֲדִים וְלִרְגָלִים אַחֲרִים הַבָּאִים
 לְקִרְאָתָנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם, שְׂמֵחִים בְּבִגְדֵי עִירָה וְשֹׂשִׁים
 בְּעִבּוּדָתָהּ, וְנֹאכֵל שֵׁם מִן הַזִּבְחִים וּמִן הַפִּסְחִים [מִן
 הַפִּסְחִים וּמִן הַזִּבְחִים] אֲשֶׁר יִגִּיעַ דָּמָם עַל קִיר מִזְבִּיחַךְ
 לְרִצּוֹן. וְנוֹדֶה לָּךְ שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ עַל גְּאֻלָּתָנוּ וְעַל פְּדוּתָנוּ נִפְשָׁנוּ.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, גָּאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי
 הַגֶּפֶן.

The second cup is drunk while leaning on the left side —
 preferably the entire cup, but at least most of it.

רחצה

The hands are washed for matzah and the following blessing is recited. It is preferable to
 bring water and a basin to the head of the household at the Seder table.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
 בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם.

הַהֶפְכִי הַצּוֹר אֶגֶם מֵיָם חֲלָמִישׁ לְמַעֲיָנוּ מֵיָם
 — *Who turns the rock into a pond of
 water, the flintrock into a fountain
 of water. To Hashem it makes no*

difference. Just as He made the
 water hard as rock at the splitting
 of the sea, so He turned the rock in-
 to water for the Jews in the desert.

MOTZI

MATZAH

The following two blessings are recited over matzah; the first is recited over matzah as food, and the second for the special mitzvah of eating matzah on the night of Pesach. [The latter blessing is to be made with the intention that it also apply to the *korach* 'sandwich' and the afikoman.] The head of the household raises all the matzos on the Seder plate and recites the following blessing:

Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the Universe,
Who brings forth bread from the earth.

The bottom matzah is put down and the following blessing is recited while the top (whole) matzah and the middle (broken) piece are still raised.

Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the Universe,
Who has sanctified us with His commandments and
commanded us with regard to eating *matzah*.

Each participant is required to eat an amount of matzah equal in volume to an egg. Since it is usually impossible to provide a sufficient amount of matzah from the two matzos for all members of the household, other matzos should be available at the head of the table from which to complete the required amounts. However, each participant should receive a piece from each of the top two matzos. The matzos are to be eaten while reclining on the left side and without delay; they need not be dipped in salt.

MAROR

The head of the household takes a half-egg volume of the maror, dips it into charoses, and gives each participant a like amount. The following blessing is recited with the intention that it also apply to the maror of the 'sandwich'. The maror is eaten without reclining, and without delay.

Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the Universe,
Who has sanctified us with His commandments and
commanded us with regard to eating *maror*.

מוציא

מצה

The following two blessings are recited over matzah; the first is recited over matzah as food, and the second for the special mitzvah of eating matzah on the night of Pesach. [The latter blessing is to be made with the intention that it also apply to the *korach* 'sandwich' and the afikoman.] The head of the household raises all the matzos on the Seder plate and recites the following blessing:

**בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמוֹצִיא לַחֵם
מִן הָאָרֶץ.**

The bottom matzah is put down and the following blessing is recited while the top (whole) matzah and the middle (broken) piece are still raised.

**בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מַצָּה.**

Each participant is required to eat an amount of matzah equal in volume to an egg. Since it is usually impossible to provide a sufficient amount of matzah from the two matzos for all members of the household, other matzos should be available at the head of the table from which to complete the required amounts. However, each participant should receive a piece from each of the top two matzos. The matzos are to be eaten while reclining on the left side and without delay; they need not be dipped in salt.

מרור

The head of the household takes a half-egg volume of the maror, dips it into charoses, and gives each participant a like amount. The following blessing is recited with the intention that it also apply to the maror of the 'sandwich'. The maror is eaten without reclining, and without delay.

**בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מָרֹר.**

KORECH

The bottom (thus far unbroken) matzah is now taken. From it, with the addition of other matzos, each participant receives a half-egg volume of matzah with an equal volume of maror (dipped into charoses which is shaken off). The following paragraph is recited and the 'sandwich' is eaten while reclining.

In commemoration of the *Beis HaMikdash* according to Hillel: This is what Hillel would do when the *Beis HaMikdash* was in existence — He would join the *Korban Pesach*, *matzah*, and *maror*, and eat them together to fulfill that which is written, "With *matzos* and *maror* they should eat it."¹

SHULCHAN ORECH

The meal should be eaten in a combination of joy and solemnity, for the meal, too, is a part of the Seder service. While it is desirable that zemiros and discussion of the laws and events of Pesach be part of the meal, extraneous conversation should be avoided. It should be remembered that the afikoman must be eaten while there is still some appetite for it. In fact, if one is so sated that he must literally force himself to eat it, he is not credited with the performance of the mitzvah of afikoman. Therefore, it is unwise to eat more than a moderate amount during the meal.

TZAFUN

From the afikoman matzah (and from additional matzos to make up the required amount) a half-egg volume portion — according to some, a full egg's volume portion — is given to each participant. It should be eaten before midnight, while reclining, without delay, and uninterrupted. Nothing may be eaten or drunk after the afikoman (with the exception of water and the like) except for the last two Seder cups of wine.

BARECH

The third cup is poured and Bircas HaMazon (Grace After Meals) is recited. According to some customs, the Cup of Eliyahu is poured at this point.

(1) *Bamidbar* 9:11.

כורך

The bottom (thus far unbroken) matzah is now taken. From it, with the addition of other matzos, each participant receives a half-egg volume of matzah with an equal volume of maror (dipped into charoses which is shaken off). The following paragraph is recited and the 'sandwich' is eaten while reclining.

זָכַר לְמִקְדָּשׁ בְּהִלָּל. בֵּן עֲשֵׂה הִלָּל בְּזִמְנֵי שְׁבִית
הַמִּקְדָּשׁ הָיָה קִיָּם. הָיָה כּוֹרֵךְ (פֶּסַח) מִצָּה וּמְרוֹר
וְאוֹכֵל בִּיחָד. לְקִיָּם מָה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר, עַל מִצּוֹת וּמְרוֹרִים
יֵאכְלֵהוּ.¹

שלחן עורך

The meal should be eaten in a combination of joy and solemnity, for the meal, too, is a part of the Seder service. While it is desirable that zemiros and discussion of the laws and events of Pesach be part of the meal, extraneous conversation should be avoided. It should be remembered that the afikoman must be eaten while there is still some appetite for it. In fact, if one is so sated that he must literally force himself to eat it, he is not credited with the performance of the mitzvah of afikoman. Therefore, it is unwise to eat more than a moderate amount during the meal.

צפון

From the afikoman matzah (and from additional matzos to make up the required amount) a half-egg volume portion — according to some, a full egg's volume portion — is given to each participant. It should be eaten before midnight, while reclining, without delay, and uninterrupted. Nothing may be eaten or drunk after the afikoman (with the exception of water and the like) except for the last two Seder cups of wine.

ברך

The third cup is poured and Bircas HaMazon (Grace After Meals) is recited.
According to some customs, the Cup of Eliyahu is poured at this point.

A song of the steps. When Hashem will bring the exiles back to Zion, it will be as if we were dreaming. Then our mouth will be filled with laughter and our tongue with joy. Then they will say among the nations, "Hashem is the One Who has done great things with these." Hashem has indeed done great things with us. We have been made happy. Hashem, return our captives like dry streams that run again in the south. Those who sow in tears will reap in song. He who goes crying, carrying his load of seed, will return singing, carrying his sheaves of grain.

May my mouth declare the praise of Hashem and may all flesh bless His Holy Name forever.¹ We will bless Hashem from this time and forever. Praise Hashem!² Give thanks to God for He is good, His kindness endures forever.³ Who can express the mighty acts of Hashem? Who can declare all His praise?⁴

If three or more males, aged thirteen or older, participate in the meal, the leader is required to formally invite the others to join him in the recitation of Grace After Meals.

Following is the *zimun*, or formal invitation.

The leader begins:

Gentlemen, let us make the blessing.

The group responds:

May the name of Hashem be blessed from this moment and forever!⁵

The leader continues:

[If ten men join the *zimun*, the words in parentheses are included.]

May the name of Hashem be blessed
from this moment and forever!⁵

With the permission of the distinguished people present,
let us bless [our God], for we have eaten from what is His.

The group responds:

Blessed is [our God] He of Whose we have eaten
and through Whose goodness we live.

The leader continues:

Blessed is [our God] He of Whose we have eaten
and through Whose goodness we live.

The following line is recited if ten men join the *zimun*.

Blessed is He and Blessed is His Name.

(1) *Tehillim* 145:21. (2) 115:18. (3) 118:1. (4) 106:2. (5) 113:2.

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת, בָּשׁוּב יְהוּה אֶת שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן, הֵינּוּ
 בְּחֻלָּמִים. אָז יִמְלֹא שְׁחוֹק פִּינוּ וּלְשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה, אָז
 יֵאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם, הִגְדִּיל יְהוּה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם אֱלֹהֵה. הִגְדִּיל יְהוּה
 לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ, הֵינּוּ שְׂמֵחִים. שׁוֹבָה יְהוּה אֶת שְׁבִיתָנוּ,
 בְּאִפְיָקִים בִּנְנָב. הוֹרְעִים בְּדַמְעָה בְּרִנָּה יִקְצְרוּ. הַלֹּךְ יִלֵּךְ
 וּבָכָה נָשָׂא מִשָּׁךְ הַזֶּרַע, בֹּא יְבֹא בְּרִנָּה, נָשָׂא אֶלְמָתִיו.
 תְּהִלַּת יְהוּה יִדְבֹּר פִּי, וַיְבָרֶךְ כָּל בָּשָׂר שֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ
 לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.¹ וְאִנְחָנוּ נִבְרָךְ יְהוּה, מַעֲתָה וְעַד
 עוֹלָם, הִלְלוּהָ.² הוֹדוּ לַיהוּה כִּי טוֹב, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ.³
 מִי יִמְלֹל גְּבוּרוֹת יְהוּה, יִשְׁמִיעַ כָּל תְּהִלָּתוֹ.⁴

If three or more males, aged thirteen or older, participate in the meal, the leader is required to formally invite the others to join him in the recitation of Grace After Meals.

Following is the *zimun*, or formal invitation.

The leader begins:

רַבּוֹתֵי נִבְרָךְ.

The group responds:

יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוּה מְבָרֶךְ מַעֲתָה וְעַד עוֹלָם.⁵

The leader continues:

[If ten men join the *zimun*, the words in parentheses are included.]

יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוּה מְבָרֶךְ מַעֲתָה וְעַד עוֹלָם.⁵

בְּרִשׁוֹת מָרְזָן וְרַבָּנָן וְרַבּוֹתֵי,

נִבְרָךְ (אֱלֹהֵינוּ) שְׂאֲכָלְנוּ מִשְּׁלוֹ.

The group responds:

בְּרוּךְ (אֱלֹהֵינוּ) שְׂאֲכָלְנוּ מִשְּׁלוֹ וּבְטוֹבוֹ חַיֵּינוּ.

The leader continues:

בְּרוּךְ (אֱלֹהֵינוּ) שְׂאֲכָלְנוּ מִשְּׁלוֹ וּבְטוֹבוֹ חַיֵּינוּ.

The following line is recited if ten men join the *zimun*.

בְּרוּךְ הוּא וּבְרוּךְ שְׁמוֹ.

Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the Universe, Who feeds the entire world with His goodness, with grace, kindness, and mercy. He gives bread to all flesh, for His kindness is eternal.¹ And in His great goodness, food has never been lacking for us, nor may it ever be, for the sake of His great name. For He feeds and supports all and does good to all and readies food for all His creatures that He created. Blessed are You, Hashem, Who feeds all.

We thank You, Hashem, our God, for giving to our ancestors as a heritage a desirable, good, and spacious land, and for taking us out, Hashem, our God, from the land of Egypt, and redeeming us from the house of bondage, and for the covenant which You sealed into our flesh, and for Your Torah which You taught us, and for Your laws which You made known to us, and for life, grace, and kindness which You have bestowed upon us, and for the food with which You feed and sustain us every day, at every time, at every moment.

For it all, Hashem, our God, we thank You and bless You. May Your name be blessed by the mouths of all who live constantly, forever, as it is written, "You will eat and you will be satisfied and you will bless Hashem, your God, for the good land which He has given you."² Blessed are You, Hashem, for the land and the food.

Have mercy, Hashem, our God, on Yisrael, Your people, and on Jerusalem, Your city, and on Zion, the abode of Your glory, and on the kingdom of David, Your *Mashiach*, and on the great and holy house upon which Your name has been called. Our God, our Father, pasture us, feed us, support us, sustain us, and rescue us. And rescue us, Hashem, our God, speedily from all of our troubles. Please, Hashem, our God, do not put us in need of gifts or loans from men. May we need only Your full, open, holy, and ample hand, so that we may never be ashamed or embarrassed.

(1) *Tehillim* 136:25. (2) *Devarim* 8:10.

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מִלֵּךְ הָעוֹלָם, הֵנּוּן אֶת הָעוֹלָם כֻּלּוֹ, בְּטוֹבוֹ, בְּחֵן בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים, הוּא נֹתֵן לֶחֶם לְכָל בָּשָׂר, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדוֹ. וּבְטוֹבוֹ הַגָּדוֹל, תָּמִיד לֹא חָסֵר לָנוּ, וְאֵל יַחְסֹר לָנוּ מִזֶּזֶן לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. בְּעֲבוּר שְׁמוֹ הַגָּדוֹל, כִּי הוּא אֵל זֶן וּמִפְרָנִס לְכָל, וּמִטִּיב לְכָל, וַיִּמְכֵּן מִזֶּזֶן לְכָל בְּרִיּוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, הֵנּוּן אֶת הַכֹּל. (Others – אַמֵּן.)

נוֹדָה לָךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, עַל שֶׁהִנְחַלְתָּ לְאַבּוֹתֵינוּ אֶרֶץ חֲמֻדָּה טוֹבָה וְרַחֲבָה. וְעַל שֶׁהוֹצַאתָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, וּפְדִיתָנוּ מִבֵּית עַבְדִּים, וְעַל בְּרִיתְךָ שֶׁחֲתַמְתָּ בְּבִשְׁרָנוּ, וְעַל תּוֹרַתְךָ שֶׁלִּמְדָתָנוּ, וְעַל חֻקֶּיךָ שֶׁהוֹדַעְתָּנוּ, וְעַל חַיִּים חֵן וְחֶסֶד שֶׁחֻנַּנְתָּנוּ, וְעַל אֲכִילַת מִזֶּזֶן שֶׁאַתָּה זֶן וּמִפְרָנִס אוֹתָנוּ תָּמִיד, בְּכָל יוֹם וּבְכָל עֵת וּבְכָל שָׁעָה.

וְעַל הַכֹּל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ מוֹדִים לָךְ, וּמְבָרְכִים אוֹתְךָ, יִתְבָּרַךְ שְׁמֶךָ בְּפִי כָל חַי תָּמִיד לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. בְּכַתּוּב, וְאֲכַלְתָּ וּשְׂבַעְתָּ, וּבִרְכַּתְךָ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, עַל הָאֶרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָךְ.² בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, עַל הָאֶרֶץ וְעַל הַמִּזֶּזֶן. (Others – אַמֵּן.)

רַחֵם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמָּךְ, וְעַל יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִירְךָ, וְעַל צִיּוֹן מִשְׁכַּן כְּבוֹדְךָ, וְעַל מַלְכוּת בֵּית דָּוִד מְשִׁיחֶךָ, וְעַל הַבַּיִת הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקְּדוֹשׁ שֶׁנִּקְרָא שְׁמֶךָ עָלָיו. אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֲבִינוּ רַעְיוֹנוֹ זִנְנוֹ פְּרִנְסָנוּ וְכֻלְכָּלָנוּ וְהַרְוִיחָנוּ, וְהַרְנוּחַ לָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִהֲרָה מְכַל צְרוּתֵינוּ. וְנָא אֵל תַּצְרִיכָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, לֹא לִיָּדִי מִתְּנֵת בָּשָׂר וָדָם, וְלֹא לִיָּדִי הַלּוֹאֲתָם, כִּי אִם לִיָּדְךָ הַמְּלָאָה הַפְּתוּחָה הַקְּדוּשָׁה וְהַרְחֲבָה, שֶׁלֹּא גִבוּשׁ וְלֹא נִכְלָם לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

On Shabbos add the following paragraph.

May it be Your will, Hashem, our God, that You fortify us through Your *mitzvos* and through the *mitzvah* of the seventh day, this great and sacred *Shabbos*. For this day is great and sacred before You, to desist from work on it, and to rest on it lovingly, in accordance with the command of Your will. May it be Your will, Hashem, our God, that You spare us any trouble, anguish, or sorrow on the day of our rest, and that You show us, Hashem, our God, the consolation of Zion, Your city, and the reconstruction of Jerusalem, Your sacred city, for You are the Master of salvations and the Master of consolations.

Our God and the God of our fathers, may there arise, come, arrive, be seen, be accepted, be heard, be taken note of, and be remembered a remembrance and recollection of us, and a remembrance of our ancestors, and a remembrance of *Mashiach* the son of David Your servant, and a remembrance of Jerusalem, Your sacred city, and a remembrance of all of Your people, the House of Israel, before You, for deliverance, for goodness, for grace, for kindness and for mercy, for life, and for peace, on this day of the Festival of *Matzos*. Remember us on it, Hashem, our God, for good, take us into account for blessing, and save us so that we may live. And with a word of salvation and mercy, have pity and be gracious to us, and have mercy upon us and save us, for our eyes look to You, for You are a merciful and gracious God.

And build Jerusalem, the city of sanctity, quickly in our days. Blessed are You, Hashem, Who builds Jerusalem in His mercy. Amen.

Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the Universe, the Powerful One, our Father, our King, our Mighty One, our Creator, our Redeemer, our Shaper, our Holy One, the Holy One of Yaakov, our Shepherd, the Shepherd of Israel, the Sovereign Who is good and does good to all, Who in each and every day has done good, is doing good, and will

On Shabbos add the following paragraph.

רְצָה וְהִחְלִיעֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָהּ, וּבְמִצְוֹת יוֹם
הַשְּׁבִיעִי הַשָּׁבֶת הַגָּדוֹל וְהַקָּדוֹשׁ הַזֶּה, כִּי יוֹם זֶה
גָּדוֹל וְקָדוֹשׁ הוּא לְפָנֶיךָ, לְשָׁבֶת בּוֹ וּלְנוּחַ בּוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה
בְּמִצְוֹת רְצוֹנָךְ, וּבְרִצּוֹנְךָ הֵנִיחַ לָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, שְׁלֹא
תְהֵא צָרָה וַיְגוֹן וַאֲנֹחָה בְּיוֹם מְנוּחָתָנוּ, וְהִרְאָנוּ יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּנִחְמַת צִיּוֹן עִירָךְ, וּבְכַנֵּן יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר קֹדֶשְׁךָ,
כִּי אַתָּה הוּא בָּעַל הַיְשׁוּעוֹת וּבָעַל הַנִּחְמוֹת.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, יַעֲלֶה, וַיָּבֵא, וַיְגַיעַ, וַיִּרְאֶה,
וַיִּרְצֶה, וַיִּשְׁמַע, וַיִּפְקֹד, וַיִּזְכֹּר וּזְכוּרֵנוּ וּפְקֻדּוֹנֵנוּ,
וּפְקֻדּוֹנֵנוּ, וּזְכוּרֵנוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, וּזְכוּרֵנוּ מְשִׁיחַ בֶּן דָּוִד עֲבָדְךָ,
וּזְכוּרֵנוּ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר קֹדֶשְׁךָ, וּזְכוּרֵנוּ כָּל עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
לְפָנֶיךָ, לְפִלִּיטָה לְטוֹבָה לְחַן וּלְחֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים, לְחַיִּים
וּלְשָׁלוֹם בְּיוֹם חַג הַמִּצּוֹת הַזֶּה. וּזְכְּרֵנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בּוֹ
לְטוֹבָה, וּפְקֻדָּנוּ בּוֹ לְבִרְכָּה, וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ בּוֹ לְחַיִּים. וּבְדִבְרֵי
יְשׁוּעָה וְרַחֲמִים, חוּס וְחַנּוּן וְרַחֵם עָלֵינוּ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ, כִּי
אֵלֶיךָ עֵינֵינוּ, כִּי אֵל חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם אַתָּה¹.

וּבִנְיָה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ. בְּרוּךְ
אַתָּה יְהוָה, בּוֹנֵה (בְּרַחֲמֵי) יְרוּשָׁלַיִם. אָמֵן.

(Others – אָמֵן.)

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הָאֵל אֲבִינוּ
מִלְכֵנוּ אֲדִירֵנוּ בּוֹרְאֵנוּ גּוֹאֲלֵנוּ יוֹצֵרֵנוּ קְדוֹשֵׁנוּ
קְדוֹשׁ יַעֲקֹב, רוֹעֵנוּ רוֹעֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל, הַמֶּלֶךְ הַטוֹב וְהַמְּטִיב
לְכָל, שֶׁבְּכָל יוֹם וַיּוֹם הוּא הַטִּיב, הוּא מְטִיב, הוּא

(1) Cf. *Nechemiah* 9:31.

do good to us. He has bestowed upon us, is bestowing upon us, and will forever bestow upon us grace, kindness, mercy, rescue, deliverance, success, blessing, salvation, consolation, livelihood, sustenance, mercy, life, peace, and all that is good. May He never let us lack for any good thing.

May the Merciful One rule over us forever. May the Merciful One be blessed in the heavens and the earth. May the Merciful One be praised for all generations, and may He take pride in us for eternity, and may we be a source of glory to Him forever and ever. May the Merciful One provide us an honorable livelihood. May the Merciful One break the yoke upon our shoulders and lead us upright to our land. May the Merciful One send us great blessing in this house, and upon this table at which we have eaten. May the Merciful One send us Eliyahu the prophet, who is remembered for the good, and may he bring us good tidings, salvations, and consolations.

The following text — for a guest to recite at his host's table — appears in *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 201.

May it be God's will that this host not be shamed nor humiliated in This World or in the World to Come. May he be successful in all his dealings. May his dealings be successful and conveniently close at hand. May no evil impediment reign over his handiwork, and may no semblance of sin or iniquitous thought attach itself to him from this time and forever.

Those eating at their own table recite the following, adding the appropriate parenthesized phrases:

May the Merciful One bless me,
(my wife/husband and children) and all that is mine.

Guests recite the following.

Children at their parents' table add the words in parentheses.

May the Merciful One bless
([my father, my teacher] the master of this house, and
[my mother, my teacher] the mistress of this house)

All guests recite the following:

them, their house, their family, and all that is theirs,

יִיטִיב לָנוּ. הוּא גִמְלָנוּ הוּא גּוֹמְלָנוּ הוּא יִגְמְלָנוּ לְעַד, לְחֵן
וּלְחֶסֶד וּלְרַחֲמִים וּלְרִנּוֹחַ הַצֶּלֶה וְהַצִּלָּה, בְּרָכָה
וְיִשׁוּעָה נְחֻמָּה פְּרִנְסָה וְכִלְכֵּלָה וְרַחֲמִים וְחַיִּים וְשָׁלוֹם
וְכָל טוֹב, וּמִכָּל טוֹב לְעוֹלָם אֵל יַחְסְרָנוּ. (Others – אַמֵּן).

הַרְחֲמֵן הוּא יִמְלוֹךְ עָלֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. הַרְחֲמֵן הוּא
יִתְבָּרֵךְ בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ. הַרְחֲמֵן הוּא יִשְׁתַּבַּח
לְדוֹר וָדוֹרִים, וְיִתְפָּאֵר בָּנוּ לְעַד וּלְנֶצַח נְצָחִים, וְיִתְהַדָּר
בָּנוּ לְעַד וּלְעוֹלָמֵי עוֹלָמִים. הַרְחֲמֵן הוּא יִפְרֹנְסֵנוּ בְּכָבוֹד.
הַרְחֲמֵן הוּא יִשְׁבּוֹר עָלֵנוּ מֵעַל צָנָאֲרָנוּ, וְהוּא יוֹלִיכֵנוּ
קוֹמָמִיּוֹת לְאַרְצֵנוּ. הַרְחֲמֵן הוּא יִשְׁלַח לָנוּ בְּרָכָה מְרֻבָּה
בְּבֵית הָזֶה, וְעַל שְׁלֵחַן זֶה שְׂאֵבְלָנוּ עָלָיו. הַרְחֲמֵן הוּא
יִשְׁלַח לָנוּ אֶת אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַנְּבִיא זְכוֹר לְטוֹב, וַיִּבְשָׁר לָנוּ
בְּשׁוֹרֹת טוֹבוֹת יִשׁוּעוֹת וְנְחֻמוֹת.

The following text — for a guest to recite at his host's table —
appears in *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 201.

יְהִי רָצוֹן שְׁלֵא יָבוֹשׁ וְלֹא יִכָּלֵם בְּעַל הַבֵּית הַזֶּה, לֹא בְּעוֹלָם
הַזֶּה וְלֹא בְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא, וַיִּצְלִיחַ בְּכָל נִכְסָיו, וַיְהִי
נִכְסָיו מוֹצְלָחִים וְקְרוּבִים לְעִיר, וְאֵל יִשְׁלֹט שְׁטֵן בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו,
וְאֵל יִזְדַּקֵּק לִפְנֵינוּ שׁוֹם דְּבַר חֲטָא וְהִרְהוֹר עֶזְרָא, מַעֲתָה וְעַד עוֹלָם.

Those eating at their own table recite the following,
adding the appropriate parenthesized phrases:

הַרְחֲמֵן הוּא יְבָרֵךְ
אוֹתִי (וְאֶת אִשְׁתִּי / בְּעָלִי וְאֶת זֶרְעִי) וְאֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לִי.

Guests recite the following.
Children at their parents' table add the words in parentheses.

הַרְחֲמֵן הוּא יְבָרֵךְ
אֶת (אָבִי מוֹרִי) בְּעַל הַבֵּית הַזֶּה,
וְאֶת (אִמִּי מוֹרְתִי) בְּעַלַּת הַבֵּית הַזֶּה,

All guests recite the following:

אוֹתָם וְאֶת בֵּיתָם וְאֶת זֶרְעָם וְאֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לָהֶם.

All continue here:

ours and all that is ours — just as our forefathers Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov were blessed with every sort of blessing.¹ So may He bless us all together with perfect blessing, and let us say: Amen.

May there be a favorable report (of them and) of us in heaven that should preserve peace. May we receive blessing from Hashem, and charity from the God of our salvation, and may we find favor and good regard in the eyes of God and man.²

On Shabbos add the following sentence:

May the Merciful One grant us a day which
is all Shabbos and rest for eternal life.

The words in parentheses are added on the two Seder nights in some communities.

May the Merciful One grant us a day which is entirely good (that everlasting day, the day when the righteous sit with crowns on their heads, enjoying the reflection of God's majesty — and may our portion be with them)!

May the Merciful One let us live to the days of the *Mashiach* and the life of the world to come. He is a tower of salvation to His king, and does kindness to His *Mashiach*, to David and his offspring forever.³ May He who makes peace in His heights make peace over us and over all of Yisrael. Now respond: Amen.

Fear Hashem, holy ones of His! For those who fear Him lack nothing.⁴ Young lions may be poor and hungry, but those who seek Hashem will not be in need of any good thing. Praise Hashem for He is good, for His kindness is eternal.⁵ You open Your hand and satisfy the wants of every living thing.⁶ Blessed is the man who trusts Hashem; then Hashem will be his security.⁷ I was once a young man and I have since aged, but I have never seen someone righteous abandoned, nor his children in want of bread.⁸ Hashem will grant strength to His people. Hashem will bless His people with peace.⁹

אוֹתָנוּ וְאֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לָנוּ, כְּמוֹ שְׁנַת־בְּרָכּוֹ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
אֲבָרְהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב בְּכָל מָכַל כָּל¹, בֶּן יְבָרַךְ אוֹתָנוּ כְּלָנוּ
יַחַד בְּבִרְכָּה שְׁלֵמָה, וְנֹאמַר, אָמֵן.

בְּמָרוֹם יִלְמְדוּ עָלֵיהֶם וְעָלֵינוּ זְכוֹת, שֶׁתִּהְיֶה לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת
שְׁלוֹם. וְנִשְׂא בְרָכָה מֵאֵת יְהוָה, וְצִדְקָה מֵאֱלֹהֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְנִמְצָא חַן וְשֶׁכֶל טוֹב בְּעֵינֵי אֱלֹהִים וְאָדָם.²

On Shabbos add the following sentence:

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יִנְחִילָנוּ יוֹם שְׁכָלוֹ שִׁבְתָּ וּמְנוּחָה לְחַיֵּי הָעוֹלָמִים.

The words in parentheses are added on the two Seder nights in some communities.

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יִנְחִילָנוּ יוֹם שְׁכָלוֹ טוֹב (יוֹם שְׁכָלוֹ אַרוּךְ,
יוֹם שְׁצִדִיקִים יוֹשְׁבִים וְעִטְרוֹתֵיהֶם בְּרֹאשֵׁיהֶם
וְנִגְהָנִים מִזֵּיו הַשְּׂכִינָה, וַיְהִי חֶלְקֵנוּ עִמָּהֶם).

הַרְחֵמֵן הוּא יִזְכֵּנוּ לִימּוֹת הַמָּשִׁיחַ וּלְחַיֵּי הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא.
מְגִדוֹל יְשׁוּעוֹת מִלְכוֹ וְעֲשֵׂה חֶסֶד לְמִשְׁיחוֹ
לְדוֹד וּלְזֶרְעוֹ עַד עוֹלָם.³ עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו, הוּא
יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְנֹאמְרוּ, אָמֵן.

יִרְאוּ אֵת יְהוָה קֹדֶשׁוֹ, כִּי אֵין מַחְסוֹר לִירְאָיו. כְּפִירִים
רָשׁוּ וְרָעִבוּ, וְדֹרֵשֵׁי יְהוָה לֹא יַחְסְרוּ כָּל טוֹב.⁴
הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד.⁵ פּוֹתֵחַ אֵת יַדְּךָ,
וּמִשְׁבִּיעַ לְכָל חַי רִצּוֹן.⁶ בְּרוּךְ הַגִּבּוֹר אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בִּיהוָה,
וְהִיָּה יְהוָה מְבִטָּחוֹ.⁷ נֶעֱר הִיִּיתִי גַם וְקִנֵּיתִי, וְלֹא רָאִיתִי
צָדִיק נִעְצָב, וְזֶרְעוֹ מִבְּקֵשׁ לֶחֶם.⁸ יְהוָה עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן, יְהוָה
יְבָרַךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם.⁹

(1) Cf. Bereishis 24:1; 27:33; 33:11. (2) Cf. Mishlei 3:4. (3) Tehillim 18:51. (4) 34:10-11.
(5) 136:1 et al. (6) 145:16. (7) Yirmiyahu 17:7. (8) Tehillim 37:25. (9) 29:11.

Upon completion of Bircas HaMazon the blessing over wine is recited and the third cup is drunk while reclining on the left side. It is preferable to drink the entire cup, but at the very least, most of the cup should be drained.

Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the Universe,
Who creates the fruit of the vine.

The fourth cup is poured. According to most customs, the Cup of Eliyahu is poured at this point, after which the door is opened in accordance with the verse, "It is a guarded night." Then the following paragraph is recited.

Pour out Your wrath upon the nations who do not know
You and upon the kingdoms who call not upon Your
name, for they have consumed Yaakov and laid waste his
dwelling.¹ Pour Your fury on them and may Your rage
overtake them.² Pursue them with anger and obliterate
them from under Hashem's skies.³

HALLEL

The door is closed and the recitation of the Haggadah is continued.

Not for us, Hashem, not for us, but for Your name give
glory, for Your kindness and Your truth. Why should
the nations say: Where is their God? Our God in the
heavens does whatever He desires. Their idols are silver

Furthermore, again like Pharaoh, *they have consumed Yaakov*. In one respect the later oppressors of the Jewish people were even worse than the Egyptians — *they have laid waste His dwelling*. They have destroyed the *Beis Hamikdash*.

We do not, however, claim to be worthy of having Hashem punish our enemies on our own account. *Not for us, Hashem, not for us, but for Your name*, Your great name which is being desecrated by the nations, *give glory* by showing them Your greatness.

The rest of this Psalm continues the dual themes of the nations' failure to recognize Hashem and their persecution of Israel. *Why should the nations say: Where is their God? Why do You want them to see us in our distress and lowliness, and question whether You are still capable of saving us as You once did? Why should they say such things when they are the opposite of the truth — that our God in the Heavens does whatever He desires*. He has complete control over the celestial hosts, all the more so over life on earth.

Upon completion of Bircas HaMazon the blessing over wine is recited and the third cup is drunk while reclining on the left side. It is preferable to drink the entire cup, but at the very least, most of the cup should be drained.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

The fourth cup is poured. According to most customs, the Cup of Eliyahu is poured at this point, after which the door is opened in accordance with the verse, "It is a guarded night." Then the following paragraph is recited.

**שִׁפְךָ חֲמַתְךָ אֶל הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִדְעוּךָ וְעַל מַמְלָכוֹת
אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְךָ לֹא קָרְאוּ. כִּי אָכַל אֶת יַעֲקֹב וְאֶת
נַהֲוֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם.¹ שִׁפְךָ עֲלֵיהֶם זַעֲמָךְ וַחֲרוֹן אַפֶּךָ יִשְׁיִגֵם.²
תִּרְדֹּף בְּאֵף וּתְשַׁמִּידֵם מִתַּחַת שְׁמַיִ יְהוָה.³**

הלל

The door is closed and the recitation of the Haggadah is continued.

**לֹא לָנוּ יְהוָה לֹא לָנוּ, כִּי לְשִׁמְךָ תֵּן כְּבוֹד, עַל חֲסִדְךָ עַל
אֲמַתְךָ. לָמָּה יֹאמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם, אֵיזָה נָא אֱלֹהֵיהֶם.
וְאֵלֵהֵינוּ בְּשִׁמְיָם, כֹּל אֲשֶׁר חָפֵץ עָשָׂה. עֲצִיבֵיהֶם בְּסָף**

(1) Tehillim 79:6-7. (2) 69:25 (3) Eichah 3:66,

שִׁפְךָ חֲמַתְךָ אֶל הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִדְעוּךָ וְעַל
מַמְלָכוֹת אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְךָ לֹא קָרְאוּ – *Pour out Your wrath upon the nations who do not know You and upon the kingdoms who call not upon Your name*. This is the beginning of the second section of the *Hallel* which, as we have mentioned above, deals with the future redemption as an expansion of the theme of the Exodus. Since we have interrupted the flow of the *Hallel* with the *Seder* meal, we introduce the second section with the verses beginning with *pour out Your wrath* which act as a transition, both recalling the preceding

theme of the Exodus and linking it with the upcoming theme of the future redemption.

This is accomplished in the following manner. Hashem had two objectives in the Exodus vis-à-vis the Egyptian people – to have them recognize His omnipotence, and to punish them for what they did to the Jews.

These objectives are recalled in *pour out Your wrath*. Here we pray to Hashem to pour out His wrath against the nations because they *do not know You*, echoing Pharaoh and his people who likewise claimed not to know Hashem.

and gold, the work of man's hands. They have a mouth, but do not speak. They have eyes, but do not see. They have ears, but do not hear. They have a nose, but do not smell. Their hands do not feel. Their feet do not walk. They do not utter sound with their throat. Their makers will be like them, all those who trust them. Yisrael, trust Hashem — He is their help and shield. House of Aharon, trust Hashem — He is their help and shield. Those who fear Hashem, trust Hashem — He is their help and shield.

Hashem Who has been mindful of us, He will bless. He will bless the house of Yisrael. He will bless the house of Aharon. He will bless those who fear Hashem, the small with the great. Hashem will add unto you, unto you and your children. You are blessed unto Hashem, the Maker of the heavens and the earth. The heavens are the heavens of Hashem, but the earth He has given to man. The dead will not praise Hashem, nor all those who descend into silence. But we will praise Hashem forever. Praise Hashem!¹

I love Him, because Hashem hears my voice, my supplications. For He has inclined His ear to me. In all my days I will call upon Him. Pangs of death have encompassed

(1) Tehillim 115.

their feet, nor do they utter the sound of prayer.

וְהָיָה יְיָ – Hashem who had been mindful of us when He took us out of Egypt, He will bless us and redeem us from our present exile.

וְיִסָּף ה' עֲלֵיכֶם עַלְיֶיכֶם וְעַל בְּנֵיכֶם – Hashem will add unto you, unto you and your children. The Psalmist foresaw that future generations, seeing the Jewish population dwindle, would despair of Hashem's salvation. Thus he reassures them: Hashem will add unto you, unto you and your children. And you can be confident of this

because you are blessed unto Hashem, the Maker of the heavens and the earth. You receive His benefactions directly from Him and thus can expect to receive them in a miraculous fashion, unlike the other nations who have heavenly beings interceding between Hashem and themselves, and are bound by the laws of nature.

וְאֶהְבֶּתִּי כִּי יִשְׁמַע ה' אֶת קוֹלִי תַחֲנוּנָי – I love Him, because Hashem hears my voice, my supplications. The Psalmist foresaw that during the long exile the nations would tell the Jews, "Your prayers are in

וְזָהָב, מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי אָדָם. פֶּה לָהֶם וְלֹא יִדְבְּרוּ, עֵינַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְאוּ. אָזְנִים לָהֶם וְלֹא יִשְׁמָעוּ, אֶף לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְיחוּן. יָדֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִמְיִשּׁוּן, רַגְלֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִהְלְכוּ, לֹא יִהְיוּ בְּגִרוֹנָם. כְּמוֹהֶם יִהְיוּ עֲשִׂיהֶם, כֹּל אֲשֶׁר בְּטַח בָּהֶם. יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּטַח בִּיהוָה, עֶזְרָם וּמִגָּנָם הוּא. בֵּית אֱהֶרֶן בְּטַחוּ בִיהוָה, עֶזְרָם וּמִגָּנָם הוּא. יִרְאֵי יְהוָה בְּטַחוּ בִיהוָה, עֶזְרָם וּמִגָּנָם הוּא.

יהוה וְכָרְנוּ יִבְרָךְ, יִבְרָךְ אֶת בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, יִבְרָךְ אֶת בֵּית אֱהֶרֶן. יִבְרָךְ יִרְאֵי יְהוָה, הַקְּטָנִים עִם הַגְּדֹלִים. יִסֹּף יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם, עֲלֵיכֶם וְעַל בְּנֵיכֶם. בְּרוּכִים אַתֶּם לִיהוָה, עֲשֵׂה שְׁמִים וְאַרְץ. הַשְׁמִים שְׁמִים לִיהוָה, וְהָאָרֶץ נָתַן לַבְּנֵי אָדָם. לֹא הִמָּתִים יִהְלְלוּ יָהּ, וְלֹא כָל יְדֵי דוֹמָה. וְאַנְחָנוּ נִבְרָךְ יָהּ, מַעֲתָה וְעַד עוֹלָם, הַלְלוּיָהּ.¹

אַהֲבָתִי כִּי יִשְׁמַע יְהוָה, אֶת קוֹלִי תַחֲנוּנִי. כִּי הִטָּה אָזְנוֹ לִי, וּבִימֵי אֶקְרָא. אֶפְפוּנִי חֲבִלֵי מוֹת,

פֶּה לָהֶם וְלֹא יִדְבְּרוּ עֵינַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְאוּ. אָזְנִים לָהֶם וְלֹא יִשְׁמָעוּ אֶף לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְיחוּן. יָדֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִמְיִשּׁוּן רַגְלֵיהֶם וְלֹא יִהְלְכוּ לֹא יִהְיוּ בְּגִרוֹנָם – *They have a mouth, but do not speak. They have eyes, but do not see. They have ears, but do not hear. They have a nose, but do not smell. Their hands do not feel. Their feet do not walk. They do not utter sound with their throat.* What is the point of this series of remarks about idols? Idolaters themselves claim only that their idols are material representations of cosmic forces, not that the idols are actually alive.

I therefore maintain that the phrase *their idols are silver and*

gold does not mean that their idols are *made* of silver and gold, but rather that the nations worship silver and gold, directing all their endeavor toward material accomplishment, *the work of man's hands*. Thus, the word *they* throughout this Psalm does not refer to idols, but rather to the nations.

They have a mouth, but do not speak the praises of Hashem. *They have eyes, but do not see* His wonders. *They have ears, but do not hear* the words of the prophets and the righteous. *They have a nose, but do not seek to smell* the fragrance of the holy incense. They do not *mitzvos* with their hands or

me, and the distress of the pit has found me. I meet with trouble and sorrow. I call on the name of Hashem: Please, Hashem, rescue my soul! Gracious is Hashem, and righteous. Our God has mercy. Hashem guards the simple. I was poor, and He saved me. Return, my soul, to your rest, for Hashem has been bountiful to you. You have delivered my soul from death, my eye from tears, my foot from stumbling. I will walk before Hashem in the lands of life. I believe that I will say: I was greatly afflicted. I said in my despondency: All men lie.

How can I repay Hashem for all His bounties to me? I will lift up a cup of salvations, and I will call out the name of Hashem. I will pay my vows to Hashem in the presence of all His people. Precious in the eyes of Hashem is death for His pious ones. I beseech You, Hashem, for I am Your slave. I am Your slave, the son of Your slavewoman. You have loosened my fetters. I will sacrifice to You an offering of thanksgiving, and I will call out the name of Hashem. I will pay my vows to Hashem in the presence of all His people. In the courtyards of the house of Hashem, in you, Jerusalem. Praise Hashem.¹

(1) Tehillim 116.

my soul from death when I was imperiled by the Egyptians. So I say with complete confidence, "*I will walk before Hashem in the lands of life*," in the Land of Israel, the land which gives life to its inhabitants, the land where the resurrection of the dead will begin.

הָאֲמַנְתִּי כִּי אֶדְבָּר אֲנִי עֲנִיתִי מָאָד — *I believe that I will say: I was greatly afflicted.* Just as we sit here tonight at the Seder and speak of our travails in Egypt and of how Hashem saved us from the Egyptians, so *I believe that* some day *I will say* about the current exile,

with the same air of gratitude and contentment, *I was greatly afflicted*, but Hashem saved me from those afflictions as well. At that time I will reflect upon my despair in the exile, and think about how *I said in my despondency: all men —* all the prophets from Moshe Rabbenu on down who prophesied redemption and consolation — *lie.*

מָה אֶשִׁיב לָהּ — *How can I repay Hashem* for all the good He has done me even when I was undeserving? *All His bounties* are a debt to me. All I can do is celebrate His salvation as we do at the Seder. In

וּמִצָּרֵי שְׁאוּל מִצָּאוֹנִי, צָרָה וַיְגֹן אִמְצָא. וּבִשְׁם יְהוָה
אֶקְרָא, אָנָּה יְהוָה מַלְטָה נַפְשִׁי. חֲנוּן יְהוָה וְצַדִּיק,
וְאַלְהֵינוּ מֵרַחֵם. שִׁמְר פִּתְאִים יְהוָה, דְּלוֹתֵי וְלִי יְהוֹשִׁיעַ.
שׁוּבִי נַפְשִׁי לְמִנוּחַיִכִּי, כִּי יְהוָה גָּמַל עָלַיִכִּי. כִּי חִלַּצְתָּ
נַפְשִׁי מִמָּוֶת, אֶת עֵינֵי מִן דְּמָעָה, אֶת רַגְלִי מִדָּחִי. אֶתְהַלֵּךְ
לִפְנֵי יְהוָה, בְּאַרְצוֹת הַחַיִּים. הֶאֱמַנְתִּי כִּי אֲדַבֵּר, אֲנִי
עָנִיתִי מְאֹד. אֲנִי אִמְרָתִי בְחָפוּזִי, כָּל הָאָדָם כֹּזֵב.

מָה אָשִׁיב לַיהוָה, כָּל תַּגְמוּלוֹהִי עָלַי. כּוֹס יִשׁוּעוֹת
אֲשָׂא, וּבִשְׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא. נִדְרֵי לַיהוָה
אֲשַׁלֵּם, נִגְדָה נָא לְכָל עַמּוֹ. יִקָּר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה, הַמִּוֹתָה
לַחֲסִידָיו. אָנָּה יְהוָה כִּי אֲנִי עֲבָדְךָ, אֲנִי עֲבָדְךָ, בֶּן אִמְתְּךָ,
פִּתְחַת לְמוֹסְרִי. לֵךְ אֲזַבַּח וְזָבַח תּוֹדָה, וּבִשְׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא.
נִדְרֵי לַיהוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם, נִגְדָה נָא לְכָל עַמּוֹ. בְּחִצְרוֹת בֵּית
יְהוָה, בְּתוֹכִי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם הִלְלוּהָ.¹

vain.” Therefore, he says in this song, *I love Him, because Hashem hears my voice*. The commentators have understood this as meaning, “I love Hashem because He hears my voice and supplications.” It seems to me, however, that the verse should be understood as if it were written, “I love my supplications because Hashem hears my voice.” That is to say, I love my prayers and I will not abandon them because I firmly believe that Hashem hears my voice and will redeem me. I know this is true because *He has inclined His ear to me* and redeemed me from exile in Egypt. Therefore, as long as the present exile might be, *in all my days I will call upon Him*, and I

will not desist from prayer. Though the pangs of death and the destruction of so many communities in sanctification of Hashem’s name *have encompassed me* in this exile, though *I meet with trouble and sorrow*, I will still call on the name of Hashem and beseech Him — *rescue my soul!* Do not let us be destroyed, Hashem, for You are *gracious* and merciful. Though we do not question the justice of whatever befalls us, still, we know that *our God has mercy*. Therefore I urge myself, “*Return, my soul, to your rest.*” Do *teshuvah* (repentance) and rest assured of speedy salvation, *for Hashem has been bountiful to you* in the past. You, Hashem, *have already delivered*

Praise Hashem! Praise Hashem, all nations! Laud Him, all states. For His love for us is strong, and the truth of Hashem is eternal. Praise Hashem!¹

Give thanks to Hashem for He is good,
for His kindness is eternal.
Let Yisrael say for His kindness is eternal.
Let the house of Aharon say for His kindness is eternal.
Let those who fear Hashem say for His kindness is eternal.

Out of distress I called Hashem. He responded to me expansively. Hashem is for me. I shall not fear. What can man do to me? Hashem is for me through my helpers, and I shall see the downfall of my enemies. It is better to take shelter in Hashem than to trust in man. It is better to take shelter in Hashem than to trust in princes. All nations have beset me. In the name of Hashem I cut them down. They have surrounded me and beset me. In the name of Hashem I cut them down. They have surrounded me like bees. They were extinguished like a fire of thorns — in the name of Hashem I cut them down. You have pushed at me to topple me, but Hashem has assisted me. The strength

(1) Tehillim 117.

thanks to Hashem. Those who should be especially grateful for Hashem's benevolence include *the house of Aharon* who will be able to resume their duties in the *Beis HaMikdash*, and *those who fear Hashem* who will then be able to pursue their sublime endeavors without distraction.

מִן הַמִּצָּר קָרָאתִי יְהוָה — *Out of distress I called Hashem* in Egypt. He responded to me expansively. Thus I know that now, too, *Hashem is for me*, and *I shall not fear*. What can man do to me? When *Hashem is for me*, even those who were my

adversaries can come to terms with me and be counted among *my helpers*, and *I shall see the downfall* of those who remain *my enemies*.

The four expressions of encompassment and surrounding which appear in quick succession in this Psalm refer to various nations who have attacked Israel. *All nations have beset me* alludes to Sancheriv and the Kingdom of Assyria who destroyed Samaria and exiled the Ten Tribes. They met with disaster, however, when they set their sights on Jerusalem. Thus, they were cut down *in the name of*

הִלְלוּ אֶת יְהוָה, כָּל גּוֹיִם, שֶׁבְּחֻוְהוּ כָּל הָאֲמִים. כִּי גָבַר
עָלֵינוּ חֲסֵדוֹ, וַאֲמַת יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם, הִלְלוּהָ.¹

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב,
יֹאמְרוּ נָא יִשְׂרָאֵל,
יֹאמְרוּ נָא בֵּית אֶהְרֹן,
יֹאמְרוּ נָא יִרְאֵי יְהוָה,
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ.
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ.
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ.
כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסֵדוֹ.

מִן הַמִּצָּר קָרָאתִי יְהוָה, עֲנֵנִי בַּמִּרְחָב יְהוָה. יְהוָה לִי לֹא
אִירָא, מֶה יַעֲשֶׂה לִּי אָדָם. יְהוָה לִי בַּעֲזָרִי,
וַאֲנִי אֶרְאֶה בְּשֹׁנָאִי. טוֹב לַחֲסוֹת בִּיהוָה, מִבֶּטֶחַ בְּאָדָם.
טוֹב לַחֲסוֹת בִּיהוָה, מִבֶּטֶחַ בַּנְּדִיבִים. כָּל גּוֹיִם סִבְבוּנִי,
בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִילֵם. סִבּוּנִי גַם סִבְבוּנִי, בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה
כִּי אֲמִילֵם. סִבּוּנִי כַּדְּבָרִים דַּעְכוּ כְּאֵשׁ קוֹצִים, בְּשֵׁם
יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִילֵם. דַּחָה דְּחִיתָנִי לְנֶפֶל, וַיהוָה עֲזָרָנִי. עֲזִי

the future, too, *I will lift up a cup of salvations* — in the plural, for then we will celebrate not only the redemption from Egypt but the final redemption as well — *and I will call out the name of Hashem* and proclaim His omnipotence to all mankind. Then *I will pay my vows to Hashem in the presence of all His people* in the rebuilt *Beis HaMikdash*.

Not only those who are alive at the time of the final redemption will experience the goodness of Hashem. *Precious in the eyes of Hashem is death for His pious ones*. The pious of all generations will experience the ultimate good, for their souls are bound up in the bond of eternal life. The Psalm concludes with a prayer that

Hashem should once again loosen the fetters of His slave, Yisrael, so that we may give thanks to Him in Jerusalem.

Praise Hashem, all nations! At the time of the Exodus, the Jews reinforced their faith in Hashem and praised Him, unlike other nations. At the time of the future redemption, however, *all nations* will praise and laud Hashem because they will recognize that *His love for us is strong*, and they will acknowledge that *the truth of Hashem's faith is eternal*.

Though at that time all nations will thank Hashem, special thanks are incumbent upon the Jewish people. This is the subject of *give*

and vengeance of Hashem has been my salvation. There is a voice of song and salvation in the tents of the righteous. The right hand of Hashem does valiantly. The right hand of Hashem is raised high. The right hand of Hashem does valiantly. I shall not die, for I shall live and tell of the deeds of Hashem. Hashem has chastised me, but He has not let me die. Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them; I will thank Hashem. This is the gate of Hashem, the righteous will enter it. I thank You, for You have answered me and become my salvation. I thank You, for You have answered me and become my salvation. The stone the builders despised has become the cornerstone. The stone the builders despised has become the cornerstone. This emanated from Hashem; it is wondrous in our eyes. This emanated from Hashem; it is wondrous in our eyes. This is the day Hashem made; let us rejoice and be glad on it. This is the day Hashem made; let us rejoice and be glad on it.

We beseech You, Hashem, save us!

We beseech You, Hashem, save us!

We beseech You, Hashem, grant us success!

We beseech You, Hashem, grant us success!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of Hashem; we bless you from the house of Hashem. Blessed is he who comes in the name of Hashem; we bless you from the house of Hashem. Hashem is God and He will give us light. Bind the festival sacrifice with cords, leading it up to the corners of the altar. Hashem is God and He will give us light. Bind the festival sacrifice with cords, leading it up to the corners of the altar.

earlier ones.

אָנא ד' הושיעֵנוּ נָא — *We beseech You, Hashem, save us!* Now that we have expressed our belief in Your ultimate salvation, we pray that You deliver us speedily.

אָנא ד' הַצְלִיחֵנוּ נָא — *We beseech You, Hashem, grant us success!* We

recognize that our redemption depends upon our repentance. *We beseech You, Hashem, grant us success* in this endeavor.

בְּרוּךְ הָבָא בְּשֵׁם ד' — *Blessed is he — the Mashiaich — who comes in the name of Hashem.* He will tell the Jewish people: your blessing is

וּזְמַרְתָּ יְהוָה, וַיְהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה. קוֹל רִנָּה וִישׁוּעָה, בְּאַהֲלֵי
 צִדִּיקִים, יָמִין יְהוָה עָשָׂה חֵיל. יָמִין יְהוָה רוֹמְמָה, יָמִין
 יְהוָה עָשָׂה חֵיל. לֹא אֲמוֹת כִּי אַחֲיָה, וְאַסְפֵּר מַעֲשֵׂי יְהוָה.
 יִסֹּר יִסְרָנִי יְהוָה, וְלִמּוֹת לֹא נִתְּנָנִי. פִּתְחוּ לִי שַׁעְרֵי צֶדֶק,
 אֲבֹא בָם אוֹדָה יְהוָה. זֶה הַשָּׁעַר לַיהוָה, צִדִּיקִים יָבֹאוּ בוֹ.
 אוֹדֶה כִּי עָנִיתָנִי, וַתֵּהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה. אוֹדֶה כִּי עָנִיתָנִי,
 וַתֵּהִי לִי לִישׁוּעָה. אָבֶן מָאֶסוּ הַבּוֹנִים, הִיָּתָה לְרֹאשׁ פִּנָּה.
 אָבֶן מָאֶסוּ הַבּוֹנִים, הִיָּתָה לְרֹאשׁ פִּנָּה. מֵאֵת יְהוָה הִיָּתָה
 זֹאת, הִיא נִפְלְאֹת בְּעֵינֵינוּ. מֵאֵת יְהוָה הִיָּתָה זֹאת, הִיא
 נִפְלְאֹת בְּעֵינֵינוּ. זֶה הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה יְהוָה, נִגִּילָה וְנִשְׂמְחָה בוֹ.
 זֶה הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה יְהוָה, נִגִּילָה וְנִשְׂמְחָה בוֹ.

אָנָּה יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא. אָנָּה יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא.
אָנָּה יְהוָה הַצִּלִּיחָה נָא. אָנָּה יְהוָה הַצִּלִּיחָה נָא.

בְּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה, בְּרַכְנוּכֶם מִבֵּית יְהוָה. בְּרוּךְ
 הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה, בְּרַכְנוּכֶם מִבֵּית יְהוָה. אֵל יְהוָה
 וַיָּאֶר לָנוּ, אָסְרוּ חַג בַּעֲבָתִים, עַד קִרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ. אֵל
 יְהוָה וַיָּאֶר לָנוּ, אָסְרוּ חַג בַּעֲבָתִים, עַד קִרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ.

Hashem on my behalf. The seeming redundancy of they have surrounded me and beset me alludes to Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians who waged many campaigns against Jerusalem before destroying it. They, too, met with a bitter end on account of what they did to Israel. Thus we say of them as well, in the name of Hashem I cut them down. They have surrounded me like bees alludes to the Persians, and the Medes and Greeks who followed quickly in their wake during the

period of the second Beis HaMikdash. About them, too, we say they were extinguished like a fire of thorns — in the name of Hashem I cut them down for they were defeated by the Chashmonaim. But of our present, lengthy exile at the hands of Edom we say you have pushed at me and you have almost been able to topple me; but Hashem has assisted me and protected me. The Psalm continues with verses expressing our confidence that Hashem will redeem us from this exile as He did from

You are my God and I will thank You. My God — I will exalt You. You are my God and I will thank You. My God — I will exalt You. Give thanks to Hashem for He is good, for His kindness is eternal. Give thanks to Hashem for He is good, for His kindness is eternal.¹

All Your works, Hashem, our God, will praise You, and Your pious ones, the righteous who perform Your will. And all Your people, the house of Israel, with song, will thank, bless, laud, glorify, exalt, adulate, sanctify, and acknowledge the majesty of Your name, our King, for to You it is good to give thanks, and to Your name it is proper to sing, because You are God for eternity. Blessed are You, Hashem, the King Who is extolled in praises.

Give thanks to Hashem for He is good
— for His kindness is eternal.

Give thanks to the God of gods
— for His kindness is eternal.

Give thanks to the Master of masters
— for His kindness is eternal.

To Him Who does great wonders alone
— for His kindness is eternal.

To Him Who makes the heavens with understanding
— for His kindness is eternal.

To Him Who stretches the earth over the water
— for His kindness is eternal.

To Him Who makes the great lights
— for His kindness is eternal.

The sun to govern the day
— for His kindness is eternal.

The moon and the stars to govern the night
— for His kindness is eternal.

To Him Who smote the firstborn of the Egyptians
— for His kindness is eternal.

(1) *Tehillim* 118.

אֱלֹהֵי אֶתָּה וְאוֹדֶךָ, אֱלֹהֵי אֲרוֹמָמְךָ. אֱלֹהֵי אֶתָּה וְאוֹדֶךָ,
אֱלֹהֵי אֲרוֹמָמְךָ. הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדּוֹ.
הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב, כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדּוֹ.¹

יְהַלְלוּךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ כָּל מַעֲשֶׂיךָ, וְחֲסִידֶיךָ צְדִיקִים
עוֹשֵׂי רְצוֹנְךָ, וְכָל עַמֶּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִנָּה
יִודוּ וַיְבָרְכוּ וַיִּשְׂבְּחוּ וַיִּפָּאֲרוּ וַיְרוֹמְמוּ וַיַּעֲרִיצוּ וַיְקַדִּישׁוּ
וַיִּמְלִיכוּ אֶת שְׁמֶךָ מִלְּכֵנוּ, כִּי לָךְ טוֹב לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְשַׁמֵּךְ
נָאֶה לְזַמֵּר, כִּי מֵעוֹלָם וְעַד עוֹלָם אֶתָּה אֵל.

הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדּוֹ.
הוֹדוּ לַאֱלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדּוֹ.
הוֹדוּ לְאֲדֹנֵי הָאֲדָנִים	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדּוֹ.
לַעֲשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת גְּדִלוֹת לְבָדּוֹ	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדּוֹ.
לַעֲשֵׂה הַשָּׁמַיִם בְּתִבּוּנָה	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדּוֹ.
לָרַקַע הָאָרֶץ עַל הַמַּיִם	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדּוֹ.
לַעֲשֵׂה אוֹרִים גְּדִלִים	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדּוֹ.
אֶת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לְמַמְשָׁלַת בַּיּוֹם	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדּוֹ.
אֶת הַיָּרֵחַ וְכּוֹכָבִים לְמַמְשָׁלוֹת בַּלַּיְלָה	
לְמַכָּה מִצָּרִים בְּכּוֹרִיָּהֶם	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדּוֹ.
	כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסִדּוֹ.

from the house of Hashem. His divine benevolence flows to you directly from His Throne of Glory with no intermediary. Hashem is God and He will give us light at that time by commanding us to bind the festival sacrifice with cords, leading it up to the corners of the altar. Stop celebrating the festival in your homes as you have been doing in the exile, and bring

the sacrifice bound in bonds of love to the altar. Then you will truly be able to thank Hashem for His eternal kindness.

All Your works, Hashem, our God, will praise You. This version of the text alludes to the time of the final redemption when all of mankind will recognize Hashem. An alternative text reads ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל כָּל

And brought Yisrael out from among them
— for His kindness is eternal.

With a strong hand and an outstretched arm
— for His kindness is eternal.

To Him Who divided the Red Sea into parts
— for His kindness is eternal.

And had Yisrael pass through it
— for His kindness is eternal.

And tossed Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea
— for His kindness is eternal.

To Him Who led His people through the desert
— for His kindness is eternal.

To Him Who smote great kings
— for His kindness is eternal.

And killed mighty kings — for His kindness is eternal.

Sichon, the king of the Emorites
— for His kindness is eternal.

And Og, the king of the Bashan
— for His kindness is eternal.

And gave their lands as an inheritance
— for His kindness is eternal.

An inheritance to Yisrael, His slave
— for His kindness is eternal.

Who remembered us in our lowliness
— for His kindness is eternal.

And redeemed us from our enemies
— for His kindness is eternal.

He gives food to all flesh — for His kindness is eternal.

Give thanks to the God of the heavens
— for His kindness is eternal.¹

The soul of every living being will praise Your name, Hashem, our God, and the spirit of all flesh will constantly glorify and exalt Your remembrance, our King. You are God forever, and besides You we have no king,

(1) *Tehillim* 136.

redeemer, savior, liberator, deliverer, supporter, or source of mercy at any time of trouble or distress. We have no God but You, God of the first and the last, God of all creatures, Master of all generations, extolled with many praises, Who conducts His world with kindness and His creatures with mercy. Hashem does not doze or slumber. He wakes those who sleep and arouses those who slumber. He makes the mute speak. He releases the imprisoned, supports those who fall, and straightens those who are bent over. You alone we thank. Even if our mouths were as full of song as the sea, and our tongue full of joyous melody as its many waves, and our lips full of praise as the expanses of the firmament, and our eyes illuminating as the sun and the moon, and our arms spread wide as the eagles of the skies, and our feet as fleet as antelopes, we still could not sufficiently praise You or bless Your name, Hashem, our God and the God of our fathers, for even a thousandth or a ten-thousandth of the good that You have done for our ancestors and for us. You redeemed us from Egypt, Hashem, our God, and delivered us from the house of bondage. You have fed us in famine and sustained us in plenty. You have saved us from the sword, rescued us from epidemic, and spared us from evil, deadly, diseases. Your mercy has helped us until this time and Your kindness has not abandoned us. Hashem, our God, do not ever desert us. Therefore the limbs which You have carved in us, the spirit and soul that You have blown into our nostrils, the tongue that You have put into our mouths — they will thank, bless, laud, glorify, exalt, adulate, sanctify, and acknowledge the majesty of Your name, our King. For every mouth gives thanks to You, every tongue vows allegiance to You, every knee bends to You, every stature bows before You, every heart fears You, and all internal organs sing out to Your name. As it is written, “All my bones say, Hashem: Who is like You, Who saves the indigent from one stronger than he, and the poor and impoverished from the one who seeks to rob him?” Who can resemble You? Who can compare to You? Who can estimate You? The great, mighty, and awesome God, the supreme God,

(1) *Tehillim* 35:10.

גואל ומושיע. פודה ומציל ומפרנס ומרחם בכל עת
צרה וצוקה. אין לנו מלך אלא אתה. אלהי הראשונים
והאחרונים אלוה כל בריות אדון כל תולדות המהלל
ברב התשבחות המנהג עולמו בחסד ובריותיו
ברחמים ויהוה לא ינום ולא ישן. המעורר ישנים
והמקיץ נרדמים והמשיח אלמים והמתיר אסורים
והסומך נופלים והזקף כפופים לה לבדך אנחנו מודים.
אלו פינו מלא שירה בים ולשוננו רנה בהמון גליו
ושפתותינו שבח כמרחבי רקיע ועינינו מאירות
בשמש וכירח וידינו פרושות בנשרי שמים ורגלינו
קלות כאילות, אין אנחנו מספיקים להודות לה יהוה
אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו ולברך את שמך על אחת
מאלף אלף אלפי אלפים ורבי רבבות פעמים הטובות
שעשית עם אבותינו ועמנו. ממצרים גאלתנו יהוה
אלהינו ומבית עבדים פדיתנו ברעב ונתנו ובשבע
כלכלתנו מחרב הצלתנו ומדבר מלטתנו ומחלים
רעים ונאמנים דליתנו. עד הנה עזרנו רחמיה ולא
עזבונו חסדיה ואל תטשנו יהוה אלהינו לנצח. על כן
אברים שפלגת בנו ורוח ונשמה שנפחת באפינו ולשון
אשר שמת בפינו הן הם יודו ויברכו וישבחו ויפארו
וירוממו ויעריצו ויקדישו וימליכו את שמך מלכנו. כי
כל פה לה יודה וכל לשון לה תשבע וכל בך לה
תכרע וכל קומה לפניה תשתחוה וכל לבבות ייראוה
וכל קרב וכליות יזמרו לשמך. בדבר שכתוב
כל עצמתי תאמרנה יהוה מי כמוך מציל עני מחזק
ממנו ועני ואביון מגזלו. מי ידמה לה ומי ישוה לה
ומי יערה לה האל הגדול הגבור והנורא אל עליון

Creator of heavens and earth. We will praise You, laud You, glorify You, and bless Your holy name, as it says: "Of David: my soul blesses Hashem, and all my insides bless His holy name."¹

O God, in the supremacies of Your might! You Who are great in the glory of Your name, Who are mighty forever and fearful through Your awe-inspiring deeds! The King Who sits upon a high and exalted throne!

He Who dwells in eternity, high and holy is His name. As it is written, "Let the righteous rejoice in Hashem. It is fitting for the upright to extol."² By the mouth of the upright You are praised. And by the words of the righteous You are blessed. And by the tongue of the pious You are exalted. And among the holy You are sanctified.

And in the assemblies of the myriads of Your people, the house of Israel, Your name will be extolled in song, our King, in each and every generation. For it is the duty of all that is created: in Your presence, Hashem, our God and the God of our fathers, to thank, praise, laud, glorify, exalt, adorn, bless, elevate, and celebrate beyond all the songs and praises of David the son of Yishai, Your servant, Your *Mashiach*.

May Your name be praised forever, our King, the God and King, great and holy, in the heavens and the earth. For hymn and praise befit You, Hashem, our God and the God of our fathers — accolade and song, strength and sovereignty, eternity, greatness and might, fame and glory, sanctity and majesty, blessing and thanksgiving, for all eternity. Blessed are You, Hashem, God, King, great in praises, the God to whom we owe thanks, the Master of wonders, Who is pleased with melodious song, the King, the God, Life of the worlds.

(1) *Tehillim* 103:1. (2) 33:1.

קָנָה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ. נִהְלָלָה וּנְשַׁבַּחָהּ וּנְפָאָרָה וּנְבָרָה אֶת
שֵׁם קִדְשָׁהּ כְּאֹמֹר לְדֹר בְּרָכִי נִפְשִׁי אֶת יְהוָה וְכָל קָרְבִּי
אֶת שֵׁם קִדְשׁוֹ.¹

הָאֵל בְּתַעֲצֻמוֹת עֹזָה הַגָּדוֹל בְּכְבוֹד שְׁמֹהּ הַגָּבוֹר
לְנֶצַח וְהַנּוֹרָא בְּנוֹרְאוּתֶיהָ הַמֶּלֶךְ הַיּוֹשֵׁב עַל
כִּסֵּא רֵם וְנִשְׂא.

שׁוֹכֵן עַד מְרוֹם וְקִדּוּשׁ שְׁמוֹ. וְכָתוּב רַנָּנוּ צְדִיקִים
בִּיהוָה לַיִּשְׂרָאֵל נֶאֱמָר תְּהִלָּה.² כִּפִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל
תְּתַהַלֵּל וּבְדַבְרֵי צְדִיקִים תִּתְבָּרָה וּבִלְשׁוֹן חֲסִידִים
תִּתְרוֹמֵם וּבִקְרֹב קִדּוּשִׁים תִּתְקַדֵּשׁ:

וּבִמְקַהֲלוֹת רַבּוֹת עִמָּהּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרָנָה יִתְפָּאֵר
שְׁמֹהּ מַלְכֵנוּ בְּכָל דּוֹר וְדוֹר שְׁכֵן חֹבֵת
כָּל הַיְּצוּרִים לִפְנֵיהָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
לְהוֹדוֹת לְהִלָּל לְשַׁבַּח לְפָאֵר לְרוֹמֵם לְהַדָּר לְבָרֵךְ
לְעֲלֹה וּלְקַלֵּס עַל כָּל דְּבָרֵי שִׁירוֹת וְתַשְׁבְּחוֹת דּוֹר בֶּן
יְשִׁי עַבְדֶּיהָ מְשִׁיחָהּ.

יִשְׁתַּבַּח שְׁמֹהּ לְעַד מַלְכֵנוּ הָאֵל הַמֶּלֶךְ הַגָּדוֹל
וְהַקִּדּוּשׁ בְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ כִּי לֹה נֶאֱמָר יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ שִׁיר וּשְׁבַחָהּ הִלָּל וְזִמְרָה
עֹז וּמִמְשָׁלָה נֶצַח גְּדֻלָּה וּגְבוּרָה תְּהִלָּה וְתִפְאָרֶת
קִדְשָׁהּ וּמַלְכוּת בְּרָכוֹת וְהוֹדָאוֹת מַעֲמָהּ וְעַד עוֹלָם:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֵל מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל בְּתַשְׁבְּחוֹת אֵל
הַהוֹדָאוֹת אֲדוֹן הַנִּפְלְאוֹת הַבוֹחֵר בְּשִׁירֵי זִמְרָה מֶלֶךְ אֵל
חַי הָעוֹלָמִים.

The blessing over wine is recited and the fourth cup is drunk while reclining to the left side. It is preferable that the entire cup be drunk, but at least one should drink most of it.

**Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the Universe,
Who creates the fruit of the vine.**

After drinking the fourth cup, the concluding blessing is recited.
On Shabbos include the passage in parentheses.

**Blessed are You, Hashem, our God, King of the universe,
for the vine and the fruit of the vine, and the produce of
the field, and for the precious, good, and spacious land that
You willed to give as an inheritance to our ancestors, to eat
of its fruit and to be sated by its goodness. Have mercy,
please, Hashem, our God, on Yisrael, Your people, and on
Jerusalem, Your city, and on Zion, the abode of Your glory,
and on Your altar and on Your Temple. Rebuild Jerusalem,
the city of sanctity, speedily in our lifetimes. Bring us up
into it and let us rejoice in its reconstruction. Let us eat of
its fruits and be sated by its goodness. May we bless You
over it in holiness and purity (and may it be Your will to fortify
us on this day of *Shabbos*), and may You bring us joy on this
day of the Festival of *Matzos*. For You, Hashem, are good
and do good to all, and we thank You for the land and the
fruit of the vine. Blessed are You, Hashem, for the land and
the fruit of the vine.**

NIRTZAH

The order of Pesach has come to its end in accordance with its Halachah, in accordance with all of its laws and statutes. Just as we have been worthy of making the *Seder* this year, so may we be worthy of making it in the future. Pure One, Who dwells in His heavenly abode, raise up the uncountable congregation of Israel. In the near future, lead the shoots You have planted to Zion, redeemed, joyously.

Next year in Jerusalem!

The blessing over wine is recited and the fourth cup is drunk while reclining to the left side.
It is preferable that the entire cup be drunk, but at least one should drink most of it.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

After drinking the fourth cup, the concluding blessing is recited.
On Shabbos include the passage in parentheses.

**בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, עַל הַגֶּפֶן
וְעַל פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן וְעַל תְּנוּבַת הַשָּׂדֶה וְעַל אֶרֶץ
חֲמֻדָּה טוֹבָה וּרְחֻבָּה שְׂרָצִית וְהִנְחִלָּתָ לְאַבּוֹתֵינוּ
לֶאֱכֹל מִפְּרִיָּה וּלְשָׂבֹעַ מִטּוֹבָה. רַחֵם נָא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל עַמָּךְ וְעַל יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִירְךָ וְעַל צִיּוֹן מִשְׁכַּן
כְּבוֹדְךָ וְעַל מִזְבִּיחְךָ וְעַל הַיְכָלְךָ. וּבִגְדֵי יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר
הַקֹּדֶשׁ בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ וְהַעֲלֵנוּ לְתוֹכָהּ וְשִׁמְחָנוּ בְּבִנְיָנָהּ
וְנֹאכַל מִפְּרִיָּה וְנִשְׂבַּע מִטּוֹבָה וְנִבְרַכְךָ עָלֶיָּה בְּקִדְשָׁהּ
וּבִטְהָרָה. [וְנִרְצָה וְהִסְלִיכָנוּ בְּיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה] וְשִׁמְחָנוּ בְּיוֹם
חַג הַמִּצּוֹת הַזֶּה. כִּי אַתָּה יְהוָה טוֹב וּמְטִיב לְכָל וְנוֹדָה
לְךָ עַל הָאֶרֶץ וְעַל פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה עַל
הָאֶרֶץ וְעַל פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן.**

נִרְצָה

**חֲסִל סְדוּר פֶּסַח בְּהִלָּכְתּוֹ. בְּכָל מִשְׁפָּטוֹ וְחֻקָּתּוֹ.
בְּאֲשֶׁר זָכִינוּ לְסִדֵּר אוֹתוֹ. בֵּן נִזְכָּה לַעֲשׂוֹתוֹ. זָךְ
שׁוֹכֵן מְעוֹנָה. קוֹמֵם קָהֵל עֲדַת מִי מָנָה. בְּקִרְוֹב נִהַל
נִטְעֵי כֶּנֶה. פְּדוּיִם לְצִיּוֹן בְּרָנָה.**

לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם.

On the first night recite the following. On the second night continue on page 144.

It happened at midnight.

Then You performed wondrous miracles at night.
At the first watch of this night.

You brought victory to the righteous convert
[Avraham] when divided for him was the night.
It happened at midnight.

You judged the king of Gerar [Avimelech]
in a dream of the night.
You terrified the Aramean [Lavan] in the dark of night.
And Israel fought with an angel
and overcame him at night.

It happened at midnight.

You bruised the firstborn seed
of Pasros [Egypt] at midnight.

They did not find their legions
when they arose at night.

The swift armies of the prince of Charoshes
[Sisera] You crushed with the stars of night.
It happened at midnight.

The blasphemer [Sancheriv] schemed to raise
his hand menacingly [over the precious city].
You made his corpses rot at night.

Bel [the Babylonian pagan deity] and his
pedestal fell in the black of night.

To the beloved man [Daniel] was revealed
the secret of the visions of night.

It happened at midnight.

He who guzzled out of the sacred vessels
[Belshatzar, king of Babylonia] was killed on that night.

The one who was saved from the lions' den
interpreted the terrors of the night.

The Agagite [Haman] nurtured hatred
and wrote decrees at night.

It happened at midnight.

וּבְכֵן וַיְהִי בַּחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה.

אָז רוֹב נְסִים הִפְלֹאֵת
בְּלַיְלָה.
בְּרֹאשׁ אֲשֶׁמֹּרֶת זֶה
הַלַּיְלָה.
גַּר צָדֵק נִצָּחָתוֹ כְּנֻחַלֵּק לוֹ
לַיְלָה.
וַיְהִי בַּחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה.

הִנֵּת מֶלֶךְ גָּרָר בַּחֲלוּם
הַלַּיְלָה.
הַפְּחָדֶת אַרְמִי בְּאֶמֶשׁ
לַיְלָה.
וַיֵּשֶׁר יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִלְאָךְ וַיּוֹכֵל לוֹ
לַיְלָה.
וַיְהִי בַּחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה.

זָרַע בְּכוּרֵי פִתְרוֹס מִחֲצֵת בַּחֲצִי
הַלַּיְלָה.
חִילָם לֹא מָצְאוּ בְּקוֹמָם
בְּלַיְלָה.
טִיסַת נָגִיד חֲרוּשֶׁת סְלִית בְּכוֹכְבֵי
לַיְלָה.
וַיְהִי בַּחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה.

יַעֲז מִחֲרָף לְנוֹפֶף אוֹי הוֹבֶשֶׁת פִּגְרִיו
הַלַּיְלָה.
פָּרַע בַּל וּמָצְבוּ בְּאִישׁוֹן
לַיְלָה.
לְאִישׁ חֲמוּדוֹת נִגְלָה רֹז חֲזוֹת
לַיְלָה.
וַיְהִי בַּחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה.

מִשְׁתַּכֵּר בְּכָלִי קֹדֶשׁ נִהְרַג בּוֹ
הַלַּיְלָה.
נוֹשַׁע מְבוֹר אֲרִיּוֹת פּוֹתֵר בַּעֲתוֹתֵי
לַיְלָה.
שֹׁנְאָה נָטַר אֲגָגִי וְכָתַב סְפָרִים
בְּלַיְלָה.
וַיְהִי בַּחֲצִי הַלַּיְלָה.

You initiated Your triumph against him	
by disturbing the sleep [of Achashverosh] at	night.
You will tread a winepress [in peace after victory]	
for him who cries out [Israel]: Our Guardian!	
What will be of this	night?
Like a guardian You will call out in response:	
The morning has come, as well as the	night.
It happened at midnight.	
The day is approaching which is neither day nor	night.
High one! Make it known that Yours are	
both the day and the	night.
Appoint watchmen over Your city all day and all	night.
Illuminate like the light of day the darkness of	night.
It will happen at midnight.	

On the first night continue on page 146.

On the second night recite the following.

And you will say: A feast of Pesach.

The power of Your mighty deeds	
You showed wondrously on	Pesach.
Foremost of all festivals You exalted	Pesach.
You revealed to the oriental [Avraham]	
the events of the night of	Pesach.
And you will say: A feast of Pesach.	
You knocked on his doors	
during the heat of the day on	Pesach.
He gave bright angels a meal of cakes of	
matzah on	Pesach.
He ran to fetch an ox in commemoration of	
the ox sacrificed [as the <i>Korban Chagigah</i> —	
the festival offering] on	Pesach.
And you will say: A feast of Pesach.	
The people of Sodom felt the wrath of Hashem	
and were set ablaze on	Pesach.
Lot escaped from them and baked matzos	
at the end of	Pesach.
You swept clean the land of Mof and Nof	
[Egyptian cities] on	Pesach.
And you will say: A feast of Pesach.	

עֹרֶרֶת נִצְחָה עָלָיו בְּנֶגֶד שְׁנֵת
 פֹּנֶה תִּדְרוֹךְ לְשֹׁמֵר מֶה
 צָרַח כְּשׁוֹמֵר וְשָׁח אֶת־א בֶּקֶר וְגַם
 וַיְהִי בַּחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה.

קָרַב יוֹם אֲשֶׁר הוּא לֹא יוֹם וְלֹא
 רֵם הוֹדַע כִּי לָהּ הַיּוֹם אֵף לָהּ
 שׁוֹמְרִים הִפְקִיד לְעִירָהּ כָּל הַיּוֹם וְכָל
 תְּאִיר כְּאֹר יוֹם חֲשֶׁכֶת
 וַיְהִי בַּחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה.

On the first night continue on page 146.

On the second night recite the following.

וּבְכֵן וַאֲמַרְתֶּם זִבְח פֶּסַח:

אֲמַץ גְּבוּרוֹתֶיךָ הַפְּלֵאת
 בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל מוֹעֲדוֹת נִשְׁאֵת
 גְּלִית לְאֹזְרָחֵי חֲצוֹת לַיִל
 וַאֲמַרְתֶּם זִבְח פֶּסַח.

דִּלְתִּיו דִּפְקֶת כָּחַם הַיּוֹם
 הִסְעִיד נוֹצְצִים עֲגוֹת מִצּוֹת
 וְאֵל הַבֶּקֶר רָץ זָכַר לְשׁוֹר עֶרֶךְ
 וַאֲמַרְתֶּם זִבְח פֶּסַח.

זוֹעֲמוֹ סְדוּמִים וְלוֹהֲטוֹ בָּאֵשׁ
 חֲלָץ לוֹט מֵהֶם וּמִצּוֹת אָפָה בִּקֵּץ
 טֹאטֵאת אֲדָמַת מוֹף וְנוֹף בְּעִבְרָה
 וַאֲמַרְתֶּם זִבְח פֶּסַח.

Hashem, the first issue of strength You bruised on the watch night of	Pesach.
Mighty One, You skipped over the firstborn son because of the blood of	Pesach,
So as not to let the destroyer enter my doors on	Pesach.
And you will say: A feast of Pesach.	
The closed city [Jericho] was handed over [to the Jews] at the time of	Pesach.
Midian was destroyed [by the Jews under the leadership of Gidon]	
through the merit of a cake of the omer on	Pesach.
The fat people of Pul and Lud [the Assyrians in the days of King Chizkiah]	
were burnt in a conflagration on	Pesach.
And you will say: A feast of Pesach.	
He [Sancheriv] would have stood at Nov, but the time of Pesach arrived.	
A hand wrote the decree of annihilation against Tzul [Babylonia] on	Pesach.
Their scout went to look for the enemy while their table was festively set on	Pesach.
And you will say: A feast of Pesach.	
Hadassah [Esther] gathered an assembly for a three-day fast on	Pesach.
The head of the evil house [Haman] You killed on a fifty-cubit pole on	Pesach.
Bring bereavement and widowhood to Utzis [Edom] in an instant on	Pesach.
Strengthen Your hand, raise Your right hand as on the night that the festival of Pesach was sanctified.	
And you will say: A feast of Pesach.	

On both nights continue here:

To Him it is fitting. To Him it is due.

Mighty in royalty, chosen by right, His legions say to Him:
Yours and only Yours; Yours, yes Yours, Yours, surely
Yours; Yours, Hashem, is the sovereignty of the world. To
Him it is fitting. To Him it is due.

פֶּסַח. יֵה רֹאשׁ כָּל אוֹן מַחֲצֶת בְּלִיל שְׁמוֹר
 פֶּסַח. כְּבִיר עַל בֶּן כְּבוֹר פֶּסַח בְּדָם
 בִּפְסַח. לְבַלְתִּי תֵת מִשְׁחִית לְבֹא בִפְתָּחִי
 וְאָמַרְתֶּם זָבַח פֶּסַח.

פֶּסַח. מִסְגֶּרֶת סִגְרָה בְּעִתּוֹתֵי
 פֶּסַח. נִשְׁמָדָה מִדִּין בְּצִלִּיל שְׁעוֹרֵי עֹמֶר
 פֶּסַח. שׁוֹרְפוֹ מִשְׁמָנִי פוֹל וְלוֹד בִּיקֵד יְקוֹד
 וְאָמַרְתֶּם זָבַח פֶּסַח.

פֶּסַח. עוֹד הַיּוֹם כְּנֹב לְעִמּוֹד עַד גָּעָה עוֹנֶת
 בִּפְסַח. פֶּס יֵד כְּתָבָה לְקַעֲקַע צוֹל
 בִּפְסַח. צָפָה הַצִּפִּית עָרוֹךְ הַשְּׁלָחַן
 וְאָמַרְתֶּם זָבַח פֶּסַח.

בִּפְסַח. קָהֵל כְּנֶסֶה הַדָּסָה צוֹם לְשֵׁלֶשׁ
 בִּפְסַח. רֹאשׁ מִבֵּית רָשָׁע מַחֲצֶת בְּעֵץ חֲמִשִּׁים
 בִּפְסַח. שְׁתֵּי אֵלֶּה רָגַע תָּבִיא לְעִדֻּת
 פֶּסַח. תַּעֲזוּ יְדֵךְ וְתֵרוֹם יְמִינְךָ בְּלִיל הַתְּקִדָּשׁ חַג
 וְאָמַרְתֶּם זָבַח פֶּסַח.

On both nights continue here:

כִּי לוֹ נֶאֱמָה, כִּי לוֹ יֶאֱמָה:

אֲדִיר בְּמִלּוּכָה, בָּחוּר בְּהִלְכָּה, גְּדוּדָיו יֹאמְרוּ לוֹ, לָךְ
 וְלָךְ, לָךְ כִּי לָךְ, לָךְ אֵף לָךְ, לָךְ יֵהוּה הַמְּמִלְכָה,
 כִּי לוֹ נֶאֱמָה, כִּי לוֹ יֶאֱמָה.

Distinguished in royalty, glorious of right. His faithful say to Him: Yours and only Yours; Yours, yes Yours; Yours, surely Yours; Yours, Hashem, is the sovereignty of the world. To Him it is fitting. To Him it is due.

Pure in royalty, firm of right. His courtiers say to Him: Yours and only Yours; Yours, yes Yours; Yours, surely Yours; Yours, Hashem, is the sovereignty of the world. To Him it is fitting. To Him it is due.

Unique in royalty, mighty of right. His disciples say to Him: Yours and only Yours; Yours, yes Yours; Yours, surely Yours; Yours, Hashem, is the sovereignty of the world. To Him it is fitting. To Him it is due.

Ruling in royalty, feared of right. Those who surround Him say to Him: Yours and only Yours; Yours, yes Yours; Yours, surely Yours; Yours, Hashem, is the sovereignty of the world. To Him it is fitting. To Him it is due.

Humble in royalty, redeeming by right. His righteous ones say to Him: Yours and only Yours; Yours, yes Yours; Yours, surely Yours; Yours, Hashem, is the sovereignty of the world. To Him it is fitting. To Him it is due.

Holy in royalty, merciful of right. His angels say to Him: Yours and only Yours; Yours, yes Yours; Yours, surely Yours; Yours, Hashem, is the sovereignty of the world. To Him it is fitting. To Him it is due.

Powerful in royalty, sustaining of right. His perfect ones say to Him: Yours and only Yours; Yours, yes Yours; Yours, surely Yours; Yours, Hashem, is the sovereignty of the world. To Him it is fitting. To Him it is due.

Mighty is He. May He build His house soon; quickly, quickly, in our lifetimes, soon. God, build; God, build; build Your house soon.

Exalted is He, great is He, distinguished is He. May He build His house soon; quickly, quickly, in our lifetimes, soon. God, build; God, build; build Your house soon.

דגול במלוכה, הדור בהלכה, ותיקיו יאמרו לו, לך
ולך, לך בי לך, לך אף לך, לך יהוה הממלכה, בי לו
נא, בי לו יאה.

זכאי במלוכה, חסין בהלכה, טפסריו יאמרו לו, לך
ולך, לך בי לך, לך אף לך, לך יהוה הממלכה, בי לו
נא, בי לו יאה.

יחיד במלוכה, בביר בהלכה, למודיו יאמרו לו, לך
ולך, לך בי לך, לך אף לך, לך יהוה הממלכה, בי לו
נא, בי לו יאה.

מושל במלוכה, נורא בהלכה, סביביו יאמרו לו, לך
ולך, לך בי לך, לך אף לך, לך יהוה הממלכה, בי לו
נא, בי לו יאה.

עניו במלוכה, פודה בהלכה, צדיקיו יאמרו לו, לך
ולך, לך בי לך, לך אף לך, לך יהוה הממלכה, בי לו
נא, בי לו יאה.

קדוש במלוכה, רחום בהלכה, שנאניו יאמרו לו,
לך ולך, לך בי לך, לך אף לך, לך יהוה הממלכה, בי לו
נא, בי לו יאה.

תקיף במלוכה, תומך בהלכה, תמימיו יאמרו לו,
לך ולך, לך בי לך, לך אף לך, לך יהוה הממלכה, בי לו
נא, בי לו יאה.

אדיר הוא יבנה ביתו בקרוב, במהרה, במהרה,
בימינו בקרוב. אל בנה, אל בנה, בנה
ביתך בקרוב.

בחור הוא. גדול הוא. דגול הוא. יבנה ביתו בקרוב,
במהרה, במהרה, בימינו בקרוב. אל בנה, אל בנה, בנה
ביתך בקרוב.

Glorious is He, faithful is He, guiltless is He, righteous is He. May He build His house soon; quickly, quickly, in our lifetimes, soon. God, build; God, build; build Your house soon.

Pure is He, unique is He, powerful is He, all-wise is He, the King is He, awesome is He, sublime is He, all-powerful is He, the Redeemer is He, all-righteous is He. May He build His house soon; quickly, quickly, in our lifetimes, soon. God, build; God, build; build Your house soon.

Holy is He, compassionate is He, Almighty is He, Omnipotent is He. May He build His house soon; quickly, quickly, in our lifetimes, soon. God, rebuild; God, build; build Your house soon.

Who knows one? I know one.

One is our God in the heavens and the earth.

Who knows two? I know two. Two are the tablets of the covenant. One is our God in the heavens and the earth.

Who knows three? I know three. Three are the fathers. Two are the tablets of the covenant. One is our God in the heavens and the earth.

Who knows four? I know four. Four are the mothers. Three are the fathers. Two are the tablets of the covenant. One is our God in the heavens and the earth.

Who knows five? I know five. Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the mothers. Three are the fathers. Two are the tablets of the covenant. One is our God in the heavens and the earth.

Who knows six? I know six. Six are the orders of the Mishnah. Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the mothers. Three are the fathers. Two are the tablets of the covenant. One is our God in the heavens and the earth.

הָדוּר הוּא. וְתִיק הוּא. וְכָאִי הוּא. חָסִיד הוּא. יִבְנֶה
בֵּיתוֹ בְּקָרוֹב, בְּמִהְרָה, בְּמִהְרָה, בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּקָרוֹב. אֵל בָּנָה,
אֵל בָּנָה, בָּנָה בֵּיתְךָ בְּקָרוֹב.

טָהוֹר הוּא. יָחִיד הוּא. בְּבִיר הוּא. לָמוּד הוּא. מֶלֶךְ
הוּא. נוֹרָא הוּא. סָגִיב הוּא. עֶזְרוֹ הוּא. פּוֹדֶה הוּא. צַדִּיק
הוּא. יִבְנֶה בֵּיתוֹ בְּקָרוֹב, בְּמִהְרָה, בְּמִהְרָה, בְּיָמֵינוּ
בְּקָרוֹב. אֵל בָּנָה, אֵל בָּנָה, בָּנָה בֵּיתְךָ בְּקָרוֹב.

קָדוֹשׁ הוּא. רַחוּם הוּא. שְׂדֵי הוּא. תַּקִּיף הוּא. יִבְנֶה
בֵּיתוֹ בְּקָרוֹב, בְּמִהְרָה, בְּמִהְרָה, בְּיָמֵינוּ בְּקָרוֹב. אֵל בָּנָה,
אֵל בָּנָה, בָּנָה בֵּיתְךָ בְּקָרוֹב.

אֶחָד מִי יוֹדֵעַ? אֶחָד אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ. אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ
שֶׁבְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ.

שְׁנַיִם מִי יוֹדֵעַ? שְׁנַיִם אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ. שְׁנֵי לַחֲוֹת הַבְּרִית,
אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁבְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ.

שְׁלֹשָׁה מִי יוֹדֵעַ? שְׁלֹשָׁה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ. שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת,
שְׁנֵי לַחֲוֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁבְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ.

אַרְבַּע מִי יוֹדֵעַ? אַרְבַּע אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ. אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת,
שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לַחֲוֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ
שֶׁבְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ.

חֲמִשָּׁה מִי יוֹדֵעַ? חֲמִשָּׁה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ. חֲמִשָּׁה חֲמִשֵּׁי
תּוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לַחֲוֹת
הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁבְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ.

שֵׁשׁ מִי יוֹדֵעַ? שֵׁשׁ אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ. שֵׁשׁ סִדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה,
חֲמִשָּׁה חֲמִשֵּׁי תּוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת,
שְׁנֵי לַחֲוֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁבְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ.

Who knows seven? I know seven. Seven are the days of the week. Six are the orders of the Mishnah. Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the mothers. Three are the fathers. Two are the tablets of the covenant. One is our God in the heavens and the earth.

Who knows eight? I know eight. Eight are the days of circumcision. Seven are the days of the week. Six are the orders of the Mishnah. Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the mothers. Three are the fathers. Two are the tablets of the covenant. One is our God in the heavens and the earth.

Who knows nine? I know nine. Nine are the months of pregnancy. Eight are the days of circumcision. Seven are the days of the week. Six are the orders of the Mishnah. Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the mothers. Three are the fathers. Two are the tablets of the covenant. One is our God in the heavens and the earth.

Who knows ten? I know ten. Ten are the commandments. Nine are the months of pregnancy. Eight are the days of circumcision. Seven are the days of the week. Six are the orders of the Mishnah. Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the mothers. Three are the fathers. Two are the tablets of the covenant. One is our God in the heavens and the earth.

Who knows eleven? I know eleven. Eleven are the stars [of Yosef's dream]. Ten are the commandments. Nine are the months of pregnancy. Eight are the days of circumcision. Seven are the days of the week. Six are the orders of the Mishnah. Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the mothers. Three are the fathers. Two are the tablets of the covenant. One is our God in the heavens and the earth.

Who knows twelve? I know twelve. Twelve are the tribes. Eleven are the stars. Ten are the commandments. Nine are the months of pregnancy. Eight are the days of circumcision. Seven are the days of the week. Six are the

שְׁבַעַה מִי יוֹדֵעַ? שְׁבַעַה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ. שְׁבַעַה יָמֵי שַׁבָּתָא,
שְׁשָׁה סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה, חֲמִשָּׁה חֲמִשֵּׁי תוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת,
שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ
שְׁבַשְׁמִים וּבְאֶרֶץ.

שְׁמוֹנָה מִי יוֹדֵעַ? שְׁמוֹנָה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ. שְׁמוֹנָה יָמֵי מִלָּה,
שְׁבַעַה יָמֵי שַׁבָּתָא, שְׁשָׁה סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה, חֲמִשָּׁה חֲמִשֵּׁי
תוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית,
אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמִים וּבְאֶרֶץ.

תְּשַׁעָה מִי יוֹדֵעַ? תְּשַׁעָה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ. תְּשַׁעָה יָרְחֵי לָדָה,
שְׁמוֹנָה יָמֵי מִלָּה, שְׁבַעַה יָמֵי שַׁבָּתָא, שְׁשָׁה סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה,
חֲמִשָּׁה חֲמִשֵּׁי תוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי
לַחֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמִים וּבְאֶרֶץ.

עֶשְׂרָה מִי יוֹדֵעַ? עֶשְׂרָה אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ. עֶשְׂרָה דְּבָרִיא,
תְּשַׁעָה יָרְחֵי לָדָה, שְׁמוֹנָה יָמֵי מִלָּה, שְׁבַעַה יָמֵי שַׁבָּתָא,
שְׁשָׁה סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה, חֲמִשָּׁה חֲמִשֵּׁי תוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת,
שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ
שְׁבַשְׁמִים וּבְאֶרֶץ.

אֶחָד עָשָׂר מִי יוֹדֵעַ? אֶחָד עָשָׂר אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ. אֶחָד עָשָׂר
כּוֹכְבֵיא, עֶשְׂרָה דְּבָרִיא, תְּשַׁעָה יָרְחֵי לָדָה, שְׁמוֹנָה יָמֵי
מִלָּה, שְׁבַעַה יָמֵי שַׁבָּתָא, שְׁשָׁה סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה, חֲמִשָּׁה
חֲמִשֵּׁי תוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לַחֹת
הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שְׁבַשְׁמִים וּבְאֶרֶץ.

שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר מִי יוֹדֵעַ? שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ. שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר
שְׁבִטֵיא, אֶחָד עָשָׂר כּוֹכְבֵיא, עֶשְׂרָה דְּבָרִיא, תְּשַׁעָה
יָרְחֵי לָדָה, שְׁמוֹנָה יָמֵי מִלָּה, שְׁבַעַה יָמֵי שַׁבָּתָא, שְׁשָׁה

orders of the Mishnah. Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the mothers. Three are the fathers. Two are the tablets of the covenant. One is our God in the heavens and the earth.

Who knows thirteen? I know thirteen. Thirteen are the attributes of Hashem. Twelve are the tribes. Eleven are the stars. Ten are the commandments. Nine are the months of pregnancy. Eight are the days of circumcision. Seven are the days of the week. Six are the orders of the Mishnah. Five are the books of the Torah. Four are the mothers. Three are the fathers. Two are the tablets of the covenant. One is our God in the heavens and the earth.

One kid, one kid that father bought for two *zuzim*. One kid, one kid.

And the cat came and ate the kid that father bought for two *zuzim*. One kid, one kid.

And the dog came and bit the cat that ate the kid that father bought for two *zuzim*. One kid, one kid.

And the stick came and beat the dog that bit the cat that ate the kid that father bought for two *zuzim*. One kid, one kid.

And the fire came and burned the stick that beat the dog that bit the cat that ate the kid that father bought for two *zuzim*. One kid, one kid.

And the water came and doused the fire that burned the stick that beat the dog that bit the cat that ate the kid that father bought for two *zuzim*. One kid, one kid.

And the ox came and drank the water that doused the fire that burned the stick that beat the dog that bit the cat that ate the kid that father bought for two *zuzim*. One kid, one kid.

סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה, חֲמִשָּׁה חֲמִשִּׁי תוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת,
שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית, אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ
שֶׁבְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ.

שְׁלֹשָׁה עָשָׂר מִי יוֹדֵעַ? שְׁלֹשָׁה עָשָׂר אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ. שְׁלֹשָׁה
עָשָׂר מִדֵּיָא, שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר שְׁבִטָיָא, אֶחָד עָשָׂר כּוֹכְבֵיָא,
עֶשְׂרֵה דְּבְרֵיָא, תַּשְׁעָה יֶרְחֵי לָדָה, שְׁמוֹנֶה יָמֵי מִילָה,
שִׁבְעָה יָמֵי שְׁבִתָא, שֵׁשָׁה סְדְרֵי מִשְׁנָה, חֲמִשָּׁה חֲמִשִּׁי
תוֹרָה, אַרְבַּע אֲמָהוֹת, שְׁלֹשָׁה אָבוֹת, שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הַבְּרִית,
אֶחָד אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁבְּשָׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ.

חַד גְּדִיָא, חַד גְּדִיָא, דְּזַבִּין אָבָא בְּתָרֵי זַוּי, חַד גְּדִיָא
חַד גְּדִיָא.

וְאַתָּא שׁוֹנָרָא וְאַכְלָה לְגְדִיָא, דְּזַבִּין אָבָא בְּתָרֵי זַוּי,
חַד גְּדִיָא חַד גְּדִיָא.

וְאַתָּא כָּלָבָא וְנִשָּׁף לְשׁוֹנָרָא, דְּאַכְלָא לְגְדִיָא, דְּזַבִּין
אָבָא בְּתָרֵי זַוּי, חַד גְּדִיָא חַד גְּדִיָא.

וְאַתָּא חוּטְרָא וְהִכָּה לְכָלָבָא, דְּנִשָּׁף לְשׁוֹנָרָא, דְּאַכְלָה
לְגְדִיָא, דְּזַבִּין אָבָא בְּתָרֵי זַוּי, חַד גְּדִיָא חַד גְּדִיָא.

וְאַתָּא נוֹרָא וְשָׂרְף לְחוּטְרָא, דְּהִכָּה לְכָלָבָא, דְּנִשָּׁף
לְשׁוֹנָרָא, דְּאַכְלָה לְגְדִיָא, דְּזַבִּין אָבָא בְּתָרֵי זַוּי, חַד
גְּדִיָא חַד גְּדִיָא.

וְאַתָּא מִיָּא וְכָבָה לְנוֹרָא, דְּשָׂרְף לְחוּטְרָא, דְּהִכָּה
לְכָלָבָא, דְּנִשָּׁף לְשׁוֹנָרָא, דְּאַכְלָה לְגְדִיָא, דְּזַבִּין אָבָא
בְּתָרֵי זַוּי, חַד גְּדִיָא חַד גְּדִיָא.

וְאַתָּא תוֹרָא וְשִׁתָּה לְמִיָּא, דְּכָבָה לְנוֹרָא, דְּשָׂרְף
לְחוּטְרָא, דְּהִכָּה לְכָלָבָא, דְּנִשָּׁף לְשׁוֹנָרָא, דְּאַכְלָה
לְגְדִיָא, דְּזַבִּין אָבָא בְּתָרֵי זַוּי, חַד גְּדִיָא חַד גְּדִיָא.

✽ שיר השירים ✽

פרק א

א שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים אֲשֶׁר לְשַׁלְמָה: ב יִשְׁקֶנִי מִנְשִׁיקוֹת פִּיהוּ כִּי-טוֹבִים
דִּדְךָ מִיָּין: ג לְרִיחַ שְׁמִנֶךָ טוֹבִים שְׁמֵן תוֹרֵק שְׁמֶךָ עַל-כֵּן עַלְמוֹת
אֶהְבֹּךָ: ד מִשְׁכְּנִי אֲחִירֶךָ נְרוּצָה הִבִּיאֵנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ חֲדָרָיו נְגִילָה וְנִשְׁמַחָה
בְּךָ נִזְכִּירָה דִּדְךָ מִיָּין מִיִּשְׁרִים אֶהְבֹּךָ: ה שְׁחוּרָה אֲנִי וְנֶאֱוָה בָנוֹת
יְרוּשָׁלַיִם כְּאֶהְיֶי קָדֵר כִּירִיעוֹת שְׁלָמָה: ו אֶל-תִּרְאֵנִי שְׂאֵנִי שְׁחַרְחֶרֶת
שְׁשׂוּפָתַי הַשָּׁמֶשׁ בְּנִי אֲמִי נִחְרוּ-בִי שְׁמֵנִי נָטְרָה אֶת-הַכְּרָמִים בְּרָמִי
שְׁלִי לֹא נָטַרְתִּי: ז הִגִּידָה לִּי שְׂאֶהְבָּה נִפְשִׁי אִיכָּה תִרְעָה אִיכָּה תִרְבִּיץ
בַּצֹּהָרִים שְׁלָמָה אֶהְיָה כַּעֲטִיָּה עַל עֲדְרֵי חֲבֵרֶיךָ: ח אִם-לֹא תִדְעִי לָךְ
הִיפָּה בְנוֹשִׁים צֹאֵי-לָךְ בְּעַקְבֵי הַצֹּאן וְרַעֲלִי אֶת-גְּדִיתֶיךָ עַל מִשְׁכְּנוֹת
הָרָעִים: ט לִסְסָתִי בְּרֻכְבֵּי פָרָעָה דְּמִיתֶיךָ רַעֲיָתִי: י נֶאֱוָה לְחִיָּיִךְ בַּתָּרִים
צֹאֲרָךְ בַּחֲרוּזִים: יא תוֹרִי זָהָב נַעֲשֶׂה-לָךְ עִם נִקְדּוֹת הַכֶּסֶף: יב עַד-
שֶׁהַמֶּלֶךְ בִּמְסָבוֹ נִרְדֵּי נָתַן רִיחוֹ: יג צִרּוֹר הֶמֶר וְדוּלִי לִי בֵּין שְׁדֵי יָלִין:
יד אֲשַׁכֵּל הַכֶּפֶר וְדוּלִי לִי בְּכֶרְמִי עֵין גְּדִי: טו הִנֵּה יָפָה רַעֲיָתִי הִנֵּה יָפָה
עֵינֶיךָ יוֹנִים: טז הִנֵּה יָפָה דוּלִי אֶף נָעִים אֶף-עַרְשֵׁנוֹ רַעֲנָנָה: יז קְרוֹת
בְּתִינוֹ אֲרָזִים רָהִיטְנוּ בְּרוֹתִים:

פרק ב

א אֲנִי חִבֵּצַלַת הַשָּׁרוֹן שׁוֹשַׁנַת הָעֲמָקִים: ב כְּשׁוֹשְׁנָה בֵּין הַחוּחִים כֵּן
רַעֲיָתִי בֵּין הַבָּנוֹת: ג כְּתִפּוֹחַ כְּעֶצִי הַיָּעַר כֵּן דוּדֵי בֵּין הַבָּנִים כְּצִלּוֹ
חֲמֹדָתִי וְיִשְׁבָּתִי וּפְרִיּוֹ מִתּוֹק לַחֲכִי: ד הִבִּיאֵנִי אֶל-בֵּית הָיִין וְדִגְלוֹ עָלִי
אֶהְבָּה: ה סִמְכוֹנִי בְּאִשִּׁישׁוֹת רַפְרוּנִי בַּתְּפוּחִים כִּי-חֹלֶת אֶהְבָּה אֲנִי:
ו שְׁמֵאלוֹ תַּחַת לְרֹאשִׁי וַיְמִינוּ תַּחְבֵּקְנִי: ז הִשְׁבַּעְתִּי אֶתְכֶם בָּנוֹת
יְרוּשָׁלַם בְּצִבְאוֹת אוֹ בְּאִילוֹת הַשָּׂדֶה אִם-תַּעֲזִירוּ וְאִם-תַּעֲזוּרְרוּ
אֶת-הָאֶהְבָּה עַד שֶׁתַּחֲפֹץ: ח קוֹל דוּדֵי הַנָּה-זֶה בָּא מִדִּלְגָּל עַל-הַהָרִים
מִקְפֹּץ עַל-הַגְּבָעוֹת: ט דוּמָה דוּדִי לְצִבִּי אוֹ לְעֶפֶר הָאֵילִים הַנָּה-זֶה
עוֹמֵד אַחֵר כְּתִלְנוּ מִשְׁגִּיחַ מִן-הַחֲלָנוֹת מִצִּיץ מִן-הַחֲרָפִים: י עֲנָה
דוּדִי וְאָמַר לִי קוֹמִי לָךְ רַעֲיָתִי יָפָתִי וּלְכִי-לָךְ: יא כִּי-הִנֵּה הִסְתָּו עֶבֶר
הַגֹּשֶׁם חִלָּף הִלָּף לוֹ: יב הַנִּצְנִים נִרְאוּ בְּאֶרֶץ עֵת הַזֹּמִיר הִגִּיעַ וְקוֹל
הַתּוֹר נִשְׁמַע בְּאַרְצָנוּ: יג הַתִּאֲנָה חֲנֻטָּה פִּגְיָה וְהַגְּפָנִים וְסִמְדֵּר נָתַנוּ
רִיחַ קוֹמִי לָךְ רַעֲיָתִי יָפָתִי וּלְכִי-לָךְ: יד יוֹנָתִי בַּחֲגִי הַסֹּלַע בְּסִתְּרִי
הַמִּדְרָגָה הָרִאשִׁי אֶת-מִרְאִיךָ הַשְּׁמִיעִינִי אֶת-קוֹלְךָ כִּי-קוֹלְךָ עָרֵב
וּמִרְאִיךָ נְאוּה: טו אֲחֻזּוֹ-לָנוּ שְׁעָלִים שְׁעָלִים קִטְנִים מַחְבְּלִים כְּרָמִים
וּכְרָמֵינוּ סִמְדֵּר: טז דוּדִי לִי וְאֲנִי לוֹ הָרָעָה בְּשׁוֹשְׁנִים: יז עַד שְׁפּוּפֹתִי

וְאַתָּא הַשּׁוֹחֵט וְשָׁחַט לְתוֹרָא, דְּשָׁתָא לְמִיָּא, דְּכָבָה
 לְנוֹרָא, דְּשָׂרְף לְחוּטְרָא, דְּהִכָּה לְכַלְבָּא, דְּנָשַׁף
 לְשׁוֹנְרָא, דְּאַכְלָה לְגִדְיָא, דְּזָבִין אָבָא בְּתֵרֵי זַוְיָ, חַד
 גִּדְיָא חַד גִּדְיָא.

וְאַתָּא מִלֵּאךְ הַמּוֹת וְשָׁחַט לְשׁוֹחֵט, דְּשָׁחַט לְתוֹרָא,
 דְּשָׁתָה לְמִיָּא, דְּכָבָה לְנוֹרָא, דְּשָׂרְף לְחוּטְרָא, דְּהִכָּה
 לְכַלְבָּא, דְּנָשַׁף לְשׁוֹנְרָא, דְּאַכְלָה לְגִדְיָא, דְּזָבִין אָבָא
 בְּתֵרֵי זַוְיָ, חַד גִּדְיָא חַד גִּדְיָא.

וְאַתָּא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא וְשָׁחַט לְמִלֵּאךְ הַמּוֹת,
 דְּשָׁחַט לְשׁוֹחֵט, דְּשָׁחַט לְתוֹרָא, דְּשָׁתָה לְמִיָּא, דְּכָבָה
 לְנוֹרָא, דְּשָׂרְף לְחוּטְרָא, דְּהִכָּה לְכַלְבָּא, דְּנָשַׁף
 לְשׁוֹנְרָא, דְּאַכְלָה לְגִדְיָא, דְּזָבִין אָבָא בְּתֵרֵי זַוְיָ, חַד
 גִּדְיָא חַד גִּדְיָא.

And the slaughterer came and slaughtered the ox that drank the water that doused the fire that burned the stick that beat the dog that bit the cat that ate the kid that father bought for two *zuzim*. One kid, one kid.

And the Angel of Death came and slaughtered the slaughterer who slaughtered the ox that drank the water that doused the fire that burned the stick that beat the dog that bit the cat that ate the kid that father bought for two *zuzim*. One kid, one kid.

And the Holy One, Blessed is He, came and slaughtered the Angel of Death who slaughtered the slaughterer who slaughtered the ox that drank the water that doused the fire that burned the stick that beat the dog that bit the cat that ate the kid that father bought for two *zuzim*. One kid, one kid.

Although the Haggadah formally ends at this point, one should continue to occupy himself with the story of the Exodus, and the laws of Pesach, until sleep overtakes him.

אֶבְאִיתִי לִגְנִי אֶחֱתִי כֻלָּה אֶרִיתִי מוֹרִי עַם-בְּשָׁמִי אֶכְלֵתִי יַעֲרִל עַם-
 דְּבָשִׁי שְׁתִּיתִי יַיִנִי עַם-חֲלָבִי אֶכְלוּ רַעִים שְׁתּוּ וּשְׁכָרוּ דוֹדִים: בִּאֲנִי
 יִשְׁנֶה וְלִבִּי עָרָה קוֹל | דוּדֵי רוֹפֶק פֶּתַח-לִי אֶחֱתִי רַעִיתִי יוֹנְתִי תַמְתִּי
 שְׂרָאשִׁי נִמְלֵא-טָל קְנֻצוֹתִי רְסִיסֵי לֵילָה: גִּפְשָׁטְתִּי אֶת-כְּתָנְתִּי אֵיכָבְהָ
 אֶלְבִּשְׁנָה רְחֻצְתִּי אֶת-רַגְלִי אֵיכָבְהָ אֶטְנַפֶּם: דִּדוּדֵי שֶׁלַח יָדוֹ מִן-הַחוּר
 וּמַעֲזֵי הָמוֹ עָלָיו: הִקְמַתִי אֲנִי לִפְתָּח לְדוּדֵי וִידֵי נְטָפוֹ-מוֹר וְאַצְבָּעֵתִי
 מוֹר עֶבֶר עַל כַּפּוֹת הַמִּנְעוּל: וּפֶתַחְתִּי אֲנִי לְדוּדֵי וְדוּדֵי חֶמֶק עֶבֶר
 נִפְשִׁי יֵצֵא בְּדַבָּרוֹ בְּקִשְׁתִּיהוּ: זֶלֶא מִצְאָתִיהוּ קָרָאתִיו וְלֹא עָנְנִי:
 זִמְצָאֲנִי הַשְּׁמָרִים הַסֹּבְבִים בְּעִיר הַכּוֹנִי פִצְעוֹנִי נִשְׁאָו אֶת-רִדְיָדִל
 מִעָלִי שְׁמָרֵי הַחֲמוֹת: חֲשַׁבְּעָתִי אֶתְכֶם בְּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם אִם-תִּמְצָאוּ
 אֶת-דוּדֵי מַה-תִּגִּידוּ לוֹ שְׁחוּלַת אֶהְבֶּה אֲנִי: טִמַּה-דוֹדְךָ מְדוּדִי הֵיפָה
 בְּנָשִׁים מַה-דוֹדְךָ מְדוּדִי שִׁבְכָה הִשְׁבַּעְתָּנוּ: יִדוּדֵי צַח וְאָדוּם דָּגוּל
 מִרְבֶּבָה: יֵאֵרָאשׁוּ כְתָם פֹּז קְנֻצוֹתֵי תִלְתָּלִים שְׁחוּרוֹת כְּעוֹרֵב: יבִּעִינִי
 כִּיּוֹנִים עַל-אֶפְיָקִי מִים רְחֻצוֹת בְּחֶלֶב יִשְׁכּוֹת עַל-מִלָּאָה: יגִּלְחִיו
 בְּעֶרְגָּת הַבָּשָׂם מַגְדָּלוֹת מְרַקְחִים שְׁפָתוֹתֵי שׁוֹשְׁנִים נְטָפוֹת מוֹר
 עֶבֶר: ידִידֵי גְלִילִי זָהָב מִמְּלָאִים בְּתַרְשִׁישׁ מַעֲזִי עֶשֶׂת שֹׁן מַעֲלָפָה
 סְפִירִים: טוֹ שׁוּקִיו עֲמוּדֵי שֵׁשׁ מִיֶּסֶדִים עַל-אֲדָנִי-פֹז מֵרָאֵהוּ כְּלָבָנוֹן
 בְּחוּר בְּאַרְזִים: טז חֲכוֹ מִמַּתְקִים וְכָלוּ מִחֲמָדִים זֶה דוּדִי וְזֶה רַעִי בְנוֹת
 יְרוּשָׁלַם:

אֶאֱנֶה הֵלֶךְ דוֹדְךָ הֵיפָה בְּנָשִׁים אֲנֶה פָנָה דוֹדְךָ וּנְבַקְשֵׁנוּ עִמָּךְ:
 בִּדְוִדִי יִרְדֵּ לִגְזוֹ לְעֶרְגוֹת הַבָּשָׂם לְרַעוֹת בְּגָנִים וְלִלְקֹט שׁוֹשְׁנִים:
 גִּאֲנִי לְדוּדִי וְדוּדֵי לִי הִרְוַעָה בְּשׁוֹשְׁנִים: דִּיפָה אֶת רַעִיתִי בְּתַרְצָה
 נֶאֱוָה כִּירוּשָׁלַם אֵימָה בְּנִדְגָלוֹת: הִסְבִּי עֵינַיִךְ מִגְדִּי שֶׁהֵם הִרְהִיבֵנִי
 שְׁעָרָךְ בְּעֶדֶר הָעֲזִים שֶׁגִּלְשׁוּ מִן-הַגִּלְעָד: וּשְׁנִיךְ בְּעֶדֶר הָרַחֲלִים
 שֶׁעָלוּ מִן-הֶרְחָצָה שֶׁכֵּלֶם מִתְאִימוֹת וְשִׁכְלָה אֵין בָּהֶם: זִכְכָּלֶךְ
 הָרְמוֹן רִקְתָּךְ מִבְּעַד לְצִמְתָּךְ: חֲשָׁשִׁים הֵמָּה מְלָכוֹת וּשְׁמָנִים פִּילִגְשִׁים
 וְעֵלְמוֹת אֵין מִסְפָּר: ט אַחַת הִיא יוֹנְתִי תַמְתִּי אַחַת הִיא לֵאמָה בָּרָה
 הִיא לִיּוֹלְדָתָה רְאוּהָ בְנוֹת וַיֵּאשְׁרוּהָ מְלָכוֹת וּפִילִגְשִׁים וַיְהַלְלוּהָ:
 ימִי-זֹאת הַנְּשָׁקָפָה כְּמוֹ-שֹׁחַר יִפָּה כְּלָבָנָה בָּרָה כַּחֲמָה אֵימָה
 בְּנִדְגָלוֹת: יא אֶל-גִּנַּת אָגוֹז יִרְדְּתִי לְרֹאוֹת בְּאֶבֶי הַנֶּחַל לְרֹאוֹת
 הַפְּרָחָה הַגֶּפֶן הַנֶּצוּ הָרִמּוֹנִים: יב לֹא יִדְעָתִי נִפְשִׁי שְׁמַתִּנִּי מִרְבֶּבֶת עַמִּי
 נְדִיב:

הַיּוֹם וְנָסוּ הַצִּלְלִים סָבַ דְּמָה-לָּהּ רוּדִי לַצִּבִּי אוֹ לְעֶפֶר הָאֵילִים
עַל-הָרִי בְּתָר:

פרק ג

אֶל-מִשְׁכְּבִי בַּלֵּילוֹת בִּקְשָׁתִי אֶת שְׁאֵהְבָה נִפְשִׁי בִקְשָׁתִי וְלֹא
מִצָּאתִי: בִּאֲקוּמָה נָא וְאֶסּוּבְכָּה בְּעִיר בְּשׁוֹקִים וּבְרַחְכוּת אֲבַקֶּשֶׁה אֶת
שְׁאֵהְבָה נִפְשִׁי בִקְשָׁתִי וְלֹא מִצָּאתִי: גִּמְצְאוּנִי הַשְׁמַרִים הַסִּבְבִּים
בְּעִיר אֶת שְׁאֵהְבָה נִפְשִׁי רֵאִיתֶם: דִּכְמַעַט שְׁעַבְרָתִי מֵהֶם עַד
שִׁמְצָאתִי אֶת שְׁאֵהְבָה נִפְשִׁי אֲחֻזְתִּי וְלֹא אֲרַפְּנוּ עַד-שֶׁהִבִּיאֲתִי
אֶל-בֵּית אִמִּי וְאֶל-חֹדֶר הַוִּרְתִּי: הַשְּׁבַעֲתִי אֶתְכֶם בְּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם
בְּצִבְאוֹת אוֹ בְּאֵילוֹת הַשָּׂדֶה אִם-תַּעֲרִירוּ | וְאִם-תַּעֲזִירוּ אֶת-הָאֵהְבָה
עַד שֶׁתִּחַפֵּץ: וְמִי זֹאת עֹלָה מִן-הַמִּדְבָּר בְּתִימְרוֹת עֶשֶׂן מִקְטֶרֶת מֵרֹ
וּלְבוֹנָה מִכָּל אֲבֶקֶת רוּכָל: זֶה הָיָה מִטְּתוֹ שֶׁלְשִׁלְמָה שְׁשִׁים גְּבוּרִים סָבִיב
לָהּ מִגְּבוּרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: חֲכָלִם אַחְוִי חָרִב מְלֻמְדֵי מִלְחָמָה אִישׁ חֲרָבוֹ
עַל-יָרְכּוּ מִפֶּחֶד בַּלֵּילוֹת: טֹאפְרִיּוֹן עָשָׂה לוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה מַעְצֵי
הַלְבָּנוֹן: יֶעֱמוּדָיו עָשָׂה כֶּסֶף רִפְיֵדָתוֹ זָהָב מְרַכְּבוֹ אֲרָגְמָן תּוֹכוֹ רִצּוֹף
אֵהְבָה מִבְּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם: יֵאֻצֵּינָה | וְרֵאֵינָה בְּנוֹת צִיּוֹן בַּמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה
בְּעֵטְרָה שְׁעֵטְרָה-לוֹ אִמּוֹ בְּיוֹם חֲתֻנָּתוֹ וּבְיוֹם שִׁמְחַת לְבוֹ:

פרק ד

אֶהְיֶה יָפָה רַעֲיָתִי הֵנָּה יָפָה עֵינֶיהָ יוֹנִים מִבְּעַד לְצִמְתָּהּ שְׁעָרָהּ בְּעֶדֶר
הָעוֹזִים שֶׁגִּלְשׁוּ מֵהָר גִּלְעָד: בִּשְׁנֵיהֶם בְּעֶדֶר הַקְּצוּבוֹת שְׁעָלוּ מִן-הָרִחֲצָה
שְׁכָלִם מִתְאִימוֹת וְשִׁכְלָה אֵין בָּהֶם: גִּכְחוּט הַשְּׁנִי שִׁפְתוֹתֶיהָ וּמִדְּבָרֶיהָ
נֶאֱוָה כְּפֶלַח הָרִמּוֹן רִקְתָּהּ מִבְּעַד לְצִמְתָּהּ: דִּכְמַגְדֵּל דּוֹיֵל צִנְאוֹרָהּ בְּנוֹי
לְתַלְפִּיּוֹת אֵלֶּף הַמְּגֵן תִּלְוִי עָלָיו כָּל שְׁלֹטֵי הַגְּבוּרִים: הַשְּׁנִי שְׁדִיף כְּשֵׁנִי
עֶפְרַיִם תְּאוּמִי צִבְיָה הָרָעִים בְּשׁוֹשְׁנִים: וְעַד שִׁפְיוֹחַ הַיּוֹם וְנָסוּ
הַצִּלְלִים אֵלֶּף לִי אֶל-הָר הַמּוֹר וְאֶל-גִּבְעַת הַלְבוֹנָה: זֶכֶלָּה יָפָה רַעֲיָתִי
וּמוֹם אֵין בָּהּ: חֲאֲתִי מִלְּבָנוֹן כִּלָּה אֲתִי מִלְּבָנוֹן תְּבוּאֵי תִשְׁוּרִי | מִרְאֵשׁ
אֲמָנָה מִרְאֵשׁ שְׁנִיר וְחִרְמוֹן מִמַּעַנּוֹת אֲרִיּוֹת מִהָרִי נִמְרִים: טֹלְבִּתִּנִּי
אֲחֲתִי כִלָּה לְבַבְתִּנִּי בְּאֶחָד מִעֵינֶיהָ בְּאֶחָד עֵנֶק מִצּוֹרְנֶיהָ: יִמְהַיְפוּ
דִּדֶּיהָ אֲחֲתִי כִלָּה מִה-טְבוֹ דִּדֶּיהָ מִיּוֹן וְרִיחַ שְׁמָנֶיהָ מִכָּל-בְּשָׁמִים:
יֵאֲנֶפֶת תִּטְפְּנָה שִׁפְתוֹתֶיהָ כִּלָּה דְּבֶשׁ וְחִלְבִּי תַּחַת לְשׁוֹנָהּ וְרִיחַ
שְׁלֹמֹתֶיהָ כְּרִיחַ לְבָנוֹן: יִכְגֹּן | נָעוּל אֲחֲתִי כִלָּה גֵל נָעוּל מַעֲיֵן חֲתוּם:
יִשְׁלַחֶיהָ פְּרִדָּס רְמוּנִים עִם פְּרִי מְגָדִים כְּפָרִים עִם-נִרְדִּים: יִדְנֶה |
וּכְרָכֶם קָנָה וְקִנְמוֹן עִם כָּל-עֵצִי לְבוֹנָה מֵרֹ וְאֵהְלוֹת עִם כָּל-רֵאשֵׁי
בְּשָׁמִים: טוֹ מַעֲיֵן גִּנִּים בְּאֵר מַיִם חַיִּים וְנִזְלִים מִן-לְבָנוֹן: טז עוֹרֵי צִפּוֹן
וּבּוּאֵי תִימָן הַפִּיחִי גִנִּי יִזְלוּ בְּשִׁמְיוֹ יִבֵּא דּוֹדִי לִגְנוֹ וְיֵאֱכַל פְּרִי מְגִדָּיו:

א שובי שובי השולמית שובי שובי ונחזה-בך מה-תחזו בשולמית
 במחלת המחנים: ב מה-יפו פעמיה בנעלים בת-נדיב חמוקי ירכיך
 כמו חללים מעשה ידי אמן: ג שררך אגן הסהר אל-יחסר המוג
 בטנך ערמת חטים סוגה בשושנים: ד שני שדיך בשני עפרים תאמי
 צביה: ה צנאך כמגדל השן עיניך ברכות בחשבון על-שער
 בת-רבים אפך כמגדל הלכנון צופה פני דמשק: ו ראשך עליך
 ככרמל ודלת ראשך בארגמן מלך אסור ברהטים: ז מה-יפית
 ומה-נעמת אהבה בתענוגים: ח זאת קומתך דמתה לתמר ושדיך
 לאשכולות: ט אמרת אעלה בתמר אחזה בסנסנו ויהיו-נא שדיך
 כאשכולות הגפן וריח אפך כתפוחים: י וחרך כיון הטוב הולך
 לדודי למישרים דובב שפתי ישנים: יא אני לדודי ועלי תשוקתו:
 יב לכה דודי נצא השדה נלינה בפפרים: יג נשכימה לכרמים נראה
 אם פרחה הגפן פתח הסמדר הנצו הרמוגים שם אתן את-ידי לך:
 יד הודו-אים נתנו-ריח ועל-פתחינו כל-מגדים חדשים גם-ישנים
 דודי צפנתי לך:

פרק ח

א מי יתנה כאח לי יונק שדי אמי אמצאך בחוץ אשקך גם לא-יבזו
 לי: ב אנהגך אביאך אל-בית אמי תלמדני אשקך מיון הרקח מעסים
 רמני: ג שמאלו תחת ראשי וימינו תחבקני: ד השבעתי אתכם בנות
 ירושלים מה-תעירו: ומה-תעירו את-האהבה עד שתחפץ: ה מי
 זאת עלה מן-המדבר מתרפקת על-דודה תחת התפוח עוררתיה
 שמה חבלתך אמה שמה חבלה ילדתה: ו שימני בחותם על-לך
 בחותם על-זרועך כי-עזה כמות אהבה קשה כשאל קנאה, רשפיה
 רשפי אש, שלהבתיה, זמים רבים לא יוכלו לכבות את-האהבה,
 ונהרות לא ישטפוה, אם יתן איש את כל-הון ביתו באהבה, בוז יבזו
 לו. ח אחות לנו קטנה, ושרים אין לה, מה-נעשה לאחותנו ביום
 שידבר-בה. ט אם-חומה היא, נבנה עליה טירת בסף, ואם-דלת היא,
 נצור עליה לוח ארז. יא אני חומה, ושדי כמגדלות, או הייתי בעיני
 כמוצאת שלום. יב פרים היה לשלמה בבעל המון, נתן את הפרם
 לנטרים, איש יבא בפריו אלף בסף. יג ברמי שלי לפני, האלף לך
 שלמה, ומאתים לנטרים את-פריו. יד היושבת בגנים, חברים
 מקשיבים לקולך, השמיעני. יו ברח דודי, ודמה לך לצבי, או לעפר
 האילים, על הרי בשמים.

הגדה זבח פסח

ABARBANEL HAGGADAH

Don Yitzchak Abarbanel was a man who made his mark on Jewish scholarship and history. As finance minister to Ferdinand and Isabella in the Spain of Columbus and the Inquisition, he worked mightily to protect Jewish lives and interests in that historically hostile country. When the Jewish community was expelled, he led them out of the country in 1492, despite pleas from the king and queen that he accept a privileged status and remain at his post without compromising his Jewishness.

But his enduring role in Jewish history lay in his writings. One of the earliest *acharonim*, he was a prolific scholar and interpreter. Abarbanel wrote one of the greatest and most extensive of all commentaries on the entire Scriptures, as well as on such other works as *Pirkei Avos*. One of his famous, treasured commentaries was on the *Haggadah*.

In this adaptation, the reader studies the *Haggadah* as Abarbanel understood it. Utilizing his unique method of asking stimulating questions on which he focuses his commentary, Abarbanel combines the classic teachings of the Sages with his own insights, and presents them in such a way that they provide a clearer understanding of the turbulent times in which he lived. And on our times, as well. For just as the Torah is timeless, so it sheds light on every era and all conditions.

This is one of the essential commentaries that clarifies every passage of the *Haggadah* and lets its illumination filter out to other areas of Torah and to the lives of its readers, in every country and age.

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